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TEMPERED INCLUSION: SYRIAN-LEBANESE AND ARMENIAN IMMIGRANTS AND PROGRESSIVE ERA POLICY MAKING, 1894-1924

By

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To my family – Don, Ellen, and Lauren Soash

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ABSTRACT

Taken as a whole, the progressive reformers who interacted with Syrian-Lebanese and Armenian immigrants generally tried to help, rather than hinder, the two peoples as they began to adjust to life in the United States. Many of the same reformers who sought to aid the two groups were strong nativists who disliked southern and eastern European immigrants' occupational and political choices and considered Asian immigrants too "alien" to assimilate into the United States. Yet several self-described progressives – both pluralists who accepted most ethnic groups and xenophobes who feared and detested the majority of immigrants – helped the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians in a variety of ways. They helped the immigrants find employment in the United States. They defended the two groups as "White" and therefore as eligible to become U.S. citizens. And, when passing discriminatory legislation against immigrants from the Asian continent, progressives in Congress carved out exceptions for the two groups.

When officials create immigration policy, they are drawing legal lines of inclusion and exclusion. Sometimes the divide falls along the lines of ideology, other times the line is drawn to separate groups of people by geography, class, or religion. As policy-makers work through this process, their biases can have a dramatic effect on immigrants' lives. The Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians understood the importance of emphasizing the ways in which their socio-economic characteristics aligned with the socio-economic preferences of the era's policy-makers. This dissertation interrogates the apparent contradiction of progressive nativists advocating in favor of Syrian-Lebanese and Armenian immigrants. By doing so, this work illustrates the intricacies of progressive era policy-making and the far-reaching impact that obscure Congressmen, a lame-duck Senator, and officials buried deep within the federal bureaucracy could have on the lives of everyday individuals trying to navigate life in their new country.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Friends of Armenia

In 1893, Alice Stone Blackwell, the daughter of two prominent Boston suffragists, was left feeling bereft as her mother fell fatally ill. To cheer her up, an old family friend of the Blackwells invited the thirty-six year old reformer to work at her summer camp in the woods of Canada. At the camp, Blackwell met a man named Ohannes Chatschumian, a "brilliant young Russian Armenian" who had been attending Harvard's Divinity School and had represented the Armenian Apostolic Church at Chicago's World Congress of Religions earlier that year. His personality, his thirst for knowledge, and his passion for Armenian culture drew her interest. Blackwell wrote that Chatschumian "opened to me a whole new world in Armenian history and literature" and familiarized her with the dangerous situation his people faced back in the Ottoman Empire. Chatschumian helped inspire Blackwell and others at the camp to create a small organization called the Society of Friends of Armenia. Their purpose, according to Blackwell, was to "spread knowledge and understanding of the Armenians, and awaken sympathy for them in the American public, and to do everything possible to secure help and protection for them at the hands of the Turks."[1]

Once they were back in Boston, Chatschumian and Blackwell began to expand the organization. They drew in local luminaries like William Lloyd Garrison Jr., the son of the famous abolitionist, Julia Ward Howe, the author of the "Battle Hymn of the Republic," and

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[1]Alice Stone Blackwell, "Armenians as I Have Known Them," Miscellaneous Folder, Armenia Subject File, Reel 22, Blackwell Family Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C., 1-2; M.C. Gismegian, "Relations with Armenians," *Armenian Affairs* 1, No. 2 (Spring 1950): 139-140.

Reverend Samuel Barrows, a Massachusetts Congressman and reformer. In 1894, the group merged together with the Philarmenic Society, a local Armenian group, to form the United Friends of Armenia Society. The organization labored on a variety of fronts to improve the life of Armenians in the United States and in the Ottoman Empire. Its members provided newly-arrived immigrants with food and shelter and helped them find jobs in Massachusetts. They paid bonds for those who had been detained at immigrant processing stations and held events celebrating Armenian culture. On the international front, the group lobbied government officials to intervene in Turkey and raised funds to help individuals still in the Middle East. As one Armenian writer put it, Blackwell was "the nerve and soul and tireless worker" of the organization; alongside her efforts towards women's suffrage and other progressive causes, Blackwell continued to work on the Armenians' behalf long after the older members of the organization like Howe, the Barrows, and her father had passed away.[2]

Blackwell was one of several self-described progressives who developed a rapport with Syrian-Lebanese and Armenian immigrants, expressing confidence in their abilities to contribute to American life. The term "progressives" has undergone intense scrutiny over the past fifty years as historians have sought to develop a consistent characterization of America's early twentieth-century reformers. In the 1950s, Richard Hofstadter's *The Age of Reform* helped establish an initial paradigm of the progressives as White, middle-class men who sought to regain their traditional authority over America's small towns in the face of increasing levels of urbanization and industrialization. Over the years, scholars have challenged Hofstadter's interpretation in a number of ways. For example, in the 1960s Robert Wiebe contradicted Hofstadter's interpretation of progressivism emerging out of the "old" middle class. In *The*

[2] Blackwell, "Armenians as I Have Known Them," 2; Gismegian, "Relations with Armenians," 141-142.

Search for Order, Wiebe argued that the impetus for reform stemmed from the "new" middle class of urban professionals seeking to impose greater efficiency on society.[3]

In subsequent decades, other historians have focused on other groups of progressive reformers beyond just those of White, middle class men. John D. Buenker's *Urban Liberalism and Progressive Reform* explored how urban immigrants and their political representatives played a critical role in support for legislation that established maximum work hours, strengthened safety codes in the workplace, and compensated injured workers.[4] Maureen Flannigan's *Seeing with their Hearts* and Glenda Gilmore's *Gender and Jim Crow* explore the ways in which women fought for political reforms in Illinois and North Carolina, respectively.[5] Gilmore's work focused primarily on the involvement of Black women, placing her alongside scholars like Douglas Flamming and Kareema J. Gray, who also examined African Americans' contributions to progressivism.[6]

Historians have increasingly emphasized the diversity of progressive reformers in terms of race, class, and gender. Many have also emphasized the groups' intellectual diversity, given that self-described progressives differed sharply on a variety of social and political issues. The sheer diversity of the progressives led historian Peter Filene to write "An Obituary for 'The Progressive Movement.'" Filene argued that "Progressivism lacked unanimity of purpose either on a programmatic or on a philosophical level," making it highly problematic to refer to a unified

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[3] Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore, "Responding to the Challenges of the Progressive Era," in *Who Were the Progressives*, ed. Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore (NY: Bedford/St. Martin, 2002), 18-19.
[4] John D. Buenker, *Urban Liberalism and Progressive Reform* (NY: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1978).
[5] Maureen A. Flanagan, *Seeing with their hearts: Chicago Women and the Vision of the Good City, 1871-1933* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002); Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina*, 1896-1920 (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1996).
[6] Douglas Flamming, "African-Americans and the Politics of Race in Progressive-Era Los Angeles" in *California Progressivism Revisited*, ed. William Deverell and Tom Sitton (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 203-228;Kareema J. Gray, "Social Change for Social Betterment: African Americans in Nineteenth-Century Philadelphia, PA," *Journal of African American Studies* 18, No. 4 (Dec. 2014): 432-456.

progressive movement.[7] In the highly influential article "In Search of Progressivism," Daniel Rodgers noted that several scholars had split the progressives into separate spheres to explain differences within the group. David Thelen divided "consumer conscious 'insurgents'" from "job conscious 'modernizers,'" whereas Sheldon Hackney separated "western democratic Bryanites" from "eastern elitist Rooseveltians" while Melvin Holli contrasted '"social' reformers" to '"structural' reformers."[8] As Rodgers stated, many scholars have embraced "a pluralistic reading of progressive politics," during which time the era witnessed an "explosion of scores of aggressive, politically active pressure groups into the space left by the recession of traditional political loyalties."[9]

Despite the variegated nature of "the progressives," scholars have not given up on the term itself. Rodgers, for example, argues that while the progressives were not necessarily in agreement with one another about their goals or tactics, they repeatedly drew from three distinctive wells of expression, specifically "the rhetoric of anti-monopolism," "the emphasis of social bonds and the social nature of human beings," and "the language of social efficiency."[10] "Taken together," he wrote, "they formed not an ideology but the surroundings of available rhetoric and ideas … within which progressives launched their crusades, recruited their partisans, and did their work."[11]

Writing for the *Journal of the Gilded Age and the Progressive Era* in 2011, Glen Gendzel also refused to leave the term "progressives" by the wayside. He wrote persuasively that the multitude of "Americans who called themselves 'progressives' a century ago must have shared something in common or else they would not have so eagerly pinned this name as a unifying

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[7] Peter G. Filene, "An Obituary for 'The Progressive Movement,'" *American Quarterly* 22, No. 1 (Spring 1970): 27.
[8] Daniel T. Rodgers, "In Search of Progressivism," *Reviews in American History* 10, No. 4 (December 1982): 115.
[9] Rodgers, "In Search of Progressivism," 114.
[10] Ibid., 123.
[11] Ibid.

badge of honor on themselves and on their movement."[12] For Gendzel, the broad, unifying theme surrounding the progressives was their willingness to leverage the powers of the state – particularly the legislative and executive branches – in order to remedy society's ills. Gendzel defines the progressives' ideology as one of "positive statism defined in opposition to the dominant late nineteenth-century conservative ideology of negative statism."[13] He argued that the group referred to themselves as progressives because they "believed in *progress*, a better future that could be reached only by conscious shared effort, not by a reliance on natural forces, abstract constitutional principles, or the market's invisible hand."[14]

Rather than try to find a grand, all-encompassing definition of progressivism, my dissertation focuses on the interactions of self-identified progressives with the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians. I use the interactions between reformers and the two groups as a lens to examine early twentieth-century institutions involved with the creation of immigration policy and to emphasize the ways in which federal policy-making held enormous consequences for the lives of hundreds of thousands of Syrian-Lebanese and Armenian individuals. My research indicates that reformers' attitudes towards the two groups span a spectrum of sorts. At one end are progressive pluralists like Blackwell, who worked with and appreciated a wide variety of ethnic groups. On the opposite end of the continuum lie a segment of progressives I refer to as "Anglo-Saxon supremacists," who deemed every immigrant group from outside a select set of countries in northern and western Europe to be of inferior quality to themselves.

Finally, in the middle of this gamut are those progressives I call "selective nativists." These individuals treated the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians with more comity than malice and

[12] Glen Gendzel, "What the Progressives Had in Common," *The Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 10, No. 3 (July 2011): 332.
[13] Ibid., 333.
[14] Ibid., 337.

more faith than skepticism, which is a notable departure from their attitudes towards most early twentieth century immigrant groups. Selective nativists, both inside and outside of the government, could swing from praising the Armenians and the Syrian-Lebanese to denigrating other ethnic groups as easily as moving from one breath to the next. The way this subset of progressives treated the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians was rooted in their ideological biases, influencing whether the reformers would serve as more of a help or a hindrance to these immigrants. During the Progressive Era, the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians' socio-economic characteristics – most were Christians who worked their way up to middle-class occupations and, for various reasons, had incentives to acculturate – lined up with the socio-economic preferences of these selective progressive nativists, allowing the immigrants to achieve a state of tempered inclusion within their worldview. Progressive era reformers did not have a black and white view regarding all "new immigrants"; rather, their views varied from group to group.

The attitudes and biases of policy-makers played an important role shaping the experiences of tens of thousands of Syrian-Lebanese and Armenian individuals. Throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the two groups confronted several trying situations. Legally, the immigrants had to prove they were of the "white race" in order to be eligible for citizenship. That eligibility to citizenship, in turn, determined if they could own land in certain states and, at the national level, whether or not the groups could even enter the country legally. Meanwhile, the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians often faced hostility from the general populace of America, enduring slights ranging from racial slurs to having to deal with property covenants. As the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians labored to overcome these issues in the United States, they also kept alert to the political and economic problems back in the Middle East. During the

1910s and 1920s, the immigrants raised money for Near East relief and pushed for the U.S. government to forcibly intervene on their countrymen's behalf.

Typically, progressive reformers were allies in these arenas, aiding in areas that were of vital importance to these immigrants' lives. Because the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians' characteristics fell within the boundaries of the selective nativists' socio-economic biases, the reformers helped the two immigrant groups move forward legally, socially and economically in ways they did not often afford to others. These progressives' attitude of relative inclusion can be seen in the way that many federal judges deemed the immigrants White and worthy of citizenship, the way that policy-makers carved out an exception for Middle Eastern immigrants in exclusionary legislation, and the way in which leading progressives in the Senate spoke out on the two groups' behalves during Congressional debates about foreign policy and refugee policy. Progressive writers and advocates outside of the formal power structures of government found their own ways of aiding the two groups – helping find them job opportunities, fundraising for relief efforts, emphasizing the merits of Armenian and Syrian-Lebanese culture, and lobbying state and federal officials.

Historiography on the Relationship between Progressivism and "New Immigrants"

Progressive nativists, particularly those in the legislative and executive branches, often felt bitterness towards those they referred to as "new" immigrants – their term for those who came to the U.S. between the 1880s and the 1920s from outside of northern and western Europe.[15] Positing that an inclusive relationship existed between reformers and two "new" immigrant groups like the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians runs counter to several prominent scholarly works. Writing in 1955, Richard Hofstadter characterized the relationship between

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[15] Robert F. Zeidel, *Immigrants, Progressives, and Exclusion Politics: The Dillingham Commission, 1900-1927* (Dekalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2004), 6.

progressives and recently-arrived immigrants as one of inherent incompatibility, with neither entity capable of understanding and relating to the other.[16] Arthur Link, Woodrow Wilson's biographer, called immigration restriction an "old progressive goal," and one of the policies that "superbly illustrated the repressive tendencies that inhered in progressivism.[17]

In recent decades, many scholars have continued to emphasize the themes of animosity, restriction, and exclusion when it comes to describing progressive law-makers' attitudes towards early-twentieth century immigrants. Robert Zeidel's *Immigrants, Progressives, and Exclusion Politics* has referred to restrictive legislation like the 1907 and 1917 Immigration Acts as progressive measures – not in the sense of being forward-thinking by today's standards, but rather as emblematic of the progressives' outlook and goals when it came to "new" immigrants.[18] Morton Keller similarly describes immigration restriction as "a paradigmatic progressive cause" and makes the case that progressivism "fed restrictionist sentiment."[19] David Southern has noted that despite reformers' rhetoric about inequities and social ills, "progressive interest almost always stopped short of the color line."[20] Daniel Tichenor's *Dividing Lines* argues that "early twentieth century nativists saw immigration restriction as the preeminent progressive cause."[21]

These authors' interpretations stem, in large part, from the legislative trend of the Progressive Era. Over the course of the first two decades of the 1900s, Congress steadily passed a series of laws that added category after category of immigrants who were to be kept from

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[16] Richard Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform* (NY: Random House, 1965), 175-186.
[17] Arthur S. Link, "What happened to the Progressive Movement in the 1920's?" *The American Historical Association* 4 (July 1959): 847-848.
[18] Zeidel, *Immigrants, Progressives, and Exclusion Politics*, 3-4, 129-130.
[19] Morton Keller, *Regulating a New Society: Public Policy and Social Change in America, 1900-1930* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994), 223, 225.
[20] David W. Southern, *The Progressive Era and Race; Reaction and Reform, 1900-1907* (Wheeling, IL: Harlan Davidson, Inc., 2005), 1.
[21] Daniel J. Tichenor, *Dividing Lines: The Politics of Immigration Control in America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 114.

entering the United States. By 1917, this list had grown to encompass almost every societal "pariah" of the early twentieth century, including "idiots," "imbeciles," "feebleminded persons," "epileptics," "insane persons," "persons of psychopathic inferiority," "persons with chronic alcoholism," "paupers," "professional beggars," "vagrants," those with "a loathsome or dangerous contagious disease," the "mentally or physically defective," "polygamists," "anarchists," "prostitutes," those who "import prostitutes," "contract laborers," and "persons likely to become a public charge." Felons, those who were over sixteen and unable to read in any language, and individuals from a wide, though not an all-encompassing, segment of Asia rounded out the list of excludable immigrants.[22] Restrictive attitudes were obviously in abundance. By the 1920s, Congressional legislators had shifted their tactics to shrink immigrant numbers even more dramatically. Instead of achieving immigration restriction by targeting certain classes of individuals, they created a quota system that severely reduced the number of European immigrants by nationality and, in 1924, outright excluded aliens ineligible to citizenship from entering the country.[23]

Given the reformers' hostility to political bosses, monopolies, and poor working and living conditions, progressive policy-makers routinely embraced restrictive immigration legislation as a means to achieve other policy aims.[24] As historian James S. Pula has noted, many progressives were very vocal about attacking "new" immigrants as cogs in the urban political machines and as individuals whose low standards enabled the abuses of factory and tenement life. From this viewpoint, immigrants were among the perpetrators, rather than the

[22] An Act To regulate the immigration of aliens to, and the residence of aliens in, the United States," Public Law 301, 64th Cong., 2d sess. (Feb. 5, 1917), 875-877.
[23] John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925*, 8 ed. (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press: 2008), 323-324.
[24] Tichenor, *Dividing Lines*, 115.

victims, of so many of the causes that reformers opposed.[25] Given both the rhetoric and the legislation of the Progressive Era, it is natural that the historiography centers upon the themes of animosity, restriction, and exclusion. I argue, however, that the exclusionary paradigm presented by Hofstadter, Keller, Zeidel, Tichenor, and other scholars is not wrong, but it is limited in that it misses the experiences of communities – like those of the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians – that do not fit the narrative. Given that the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians were the two largest Middle Eastern immigrant groups in the U.S. during the first two decades of the twentieth century, the emphasis on restriction leaves a key region of the world and its people out of the story.

While scholars like Hofstadter or Zeidel focus on the issue of immigration as a whole, others have examined the relationship between progressive reformers and individual minority groups. This body of literature includes significant scholarship on African Americans and a variety of immigrants.[26] When it comes to the relationship between progressivism and the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians, however, very little has been done by scholars of the Middle East or of the Progressive Era to explore the connection between the two entities. Key monographs that discuss the Syrian-Lebanese around the turn of the century include Akram Fouad Khater's *Inventing Home; Emigration, Gender, and the Middle Class in Lebanon, 1870-1920*, Alixa Naff's *Becoming American: The Early Arab Immigrant Experience*, and Sarah M.

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[25] James S. Pula, "The Progressives, the Immigrant, and the Workplace: Defining Public Perceptions, 1900-1914," *Polish American Studies*, 52, No. 2 (Autumn 1995): 58.

[26] For instance, see C. Vann Woodward, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*, 3 ed. (NY: Oxford University Press, 2002); William A. Link, *The Paradox of Southern Progressivism, 1880-1930* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1992); Roger Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice, the Anti-Japanese Movement in California and the Struggle for Japanese Exclusion* (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1977); Pula, "The Progressives, the Immigrant, and the Workplace," 57-69.

A. Gualitieri's *Between Arab and White: Race and Ethnicity in the Early Syrian American Diaspora*.[27] Each has strongly influenced my own writing in its own way.

Naff's *Becoming American* is the earliest of the three books. Though not an academic, Naff wrote a foundational work on Syrian-Lebanese peddling. The huge collection of documents and oral histories she gathered to produce her work now reside at the Smithsonian and have served as a significant resource for many scholars. Naff's arguments on the financial and social benefits of long-distance pack peddling are frequently invoked by historians of the Syrian-Lebanese. Her arguments help me to make the case in Chapter Two that many Syrian- Lebanese had risen economically, and, in some ways, socially, into the middle class by the time Congress started to seriously scrutinize individual immigrant groups. Whereas Naff is focused on the intimate details of the pack-peddlers' experiences, Khater's *Inventing Home* explores the trajectory of those individuals who returned back to Mount Lebanon rather than settling permanently in the United States. *Inventing Home* details the profound effect the migrants had upon Syrian-Lebanese notions of modernity and the overall culture and economy of Mount Lebanon.

In *Becoming American and Inventing Home*, Naff and Khater make oblique references to progressive reformers. Echoing Wiebe's description of the progressives, Khater refers to the immigrants coming to the U.S. in "a time when a predominantly white, Anglo-Saxon, and protestant middle class was ascendant." He writes that those engaged in this "hegemonic, middle class culture" viewed the Syrian-Lebanese through the lens of Orientalism, operating under the

[27] Akram Fouad Khater, *Inventing Home; Emigration, Gender, and the Middle Class in Lebanon, 1870-1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001); Alixa Naff, *Becoming American, The Early Arab Immigrant Experience* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1985); Sarah M. A. Gualtieri, *Between Arab and White: Race and Ethnicity in the Early Syrian American Diaspora* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009).

dichotomies of “West” and “East,” “us” and “them.”[28] In a similar vein, Naff describes a “rising urban middle class” who disliked monopolies, labor unions, slums, and political corruption, and successfully pressured Congress into restricting immigration. She mentions a series of naturalization cases specific to the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians, but most of the hostile political reactions she brings up in the section are tied to immigration in general rather than to the Syrian-Lebanese specifically.[29] Given that Progressive Era judges eventually concluded that the Syrian-Lebanese were White and therefore eligible to citizenship, given that Congress went out of its way to draw an exception for immigrants from the Ottoman Empire in the restrictive 1917 Immigration Act, and given the efforts of certain reformers to help the people of Armenia following World War One, there is room for a more nuanced interpretation of the relationship between progressives and the Syrian-Lebanese.

Gualtieri’s *Between Arab and White* has the most overlap with my work. She does not take a “black and white” view of the experiences of the Syrian-Lebanese in the United States, but rather notes several examples of “racial instability and of ‘inbetweenness.’”[30] Her work covers the same naturalization cases mentioned by Naff, but *Between Arab and White* goes into far more depth exploring the intricacies of each court decision. Other chapters of her monograph detail the lynching of a Syrian-Lebanese individual, Nola Romey, in 1929 and the internal debates of the Syrian-Lebanese in the Arabic and English language presses regarding issues of nationalism, race, and gender.

Gualtieri’s conception of the Syrian-Lebanese as an “in-between people,” which echoes arguments made by David Roediger and James Barrett in the field of whiteness studies, is a

[28] Khater, *Inventing Home*, 71-72.
[29] Naff, *Becoming American*, 121-123.
[30] Gualtieri, *Between Arab and White,* 4.

useful one.[31] It captures the way in which the Syrian-Lebanese were difficult to pigeonhole into a single established racial category: not quite Asian, not quite African, and not quite European. The conceptualization encapsulates how Dr. Michael Shadid could become the chief surgeon of a hospital in Oklahoma, receive thousands of votes as the Farm-Labor Party's nominee for lieutenant governor, and yet be ostracized socially by two other doctors living across the street from him who had joined the KKK.[32] It was a sense of "inbetweenness" at play when a Syrian-Lebanese immigrant in the South stated that "[t]he good white families do not believe we are their equals, and we do not feel that the lower whites are our equals."[33] The concept is central to many of the immigrants' experiences in the United States.

My project and Gualtieri's scholarship differ in important ways. She makes no connection between the Syrian-Lebanese and the progressives. *Between Arab and White* explores the naturalization cases happening in the court system but rarely touches on legislative debates regarding immigration policy and foreign affairs. Lastly, her work focuses purely on the Syrian-Lebanese, whereas I look at Armenians as another group that received relatively favorable treatment during the Progressive Era. Gualtieri's aforementioned emphasis on "inbetweenness," however, resonates with my own work, in that the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians' inclusion within the progressives' worldview had its limitations. During the 1900s and 1910s, the groups often fared well in comparison to African Americans, Asian immigrants, and Southern and Eastern Europeans, but reformers tempered their enthusiasm when policy-

[31] James R. Barret and David Roediger, "Inbetween Peoples: Race, Nationality and the 'New Immigrant' Working Class," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 16, No. 3 (Spring 1997): 3-54.
[32] M. Shadid, "Syria for the Syrians," *Syrian World* 1, No. 8 (February 1927): 22-23; Fayad H. Barkett, "Syrians in Oklahoma," *Syrian World* 1, No. 10 (April 1927): 48-49; Gualtieri, *Between Arab and White*, 106-108.
[33] Afif I. Tannous, "Acculturation of an Arab-Syrian Community in the Deep South," *American Sociological Review* 8, No. 3 (June 1943), 271.

makers insisted on contrasting them to the people of Western and Northern Europe and their descendants.

When it comes to the history of Armenian immigrants in the U.S. at the turn of the century, various scholars have proved useful to this study. Robert Mirak's *Torn Between Two Lands; Armenians in America, 1890 to World War I* is a seminal work.[34] While Mirak does not explicitly tie the immigrants to the concept of progressivism, his monograph provides a rich overview of the Armenians' experiences in the United States. Mirak's description of the group's social, political, and economic situation during the Progressive Era is particularly useful in my own work, in that it helps explain what the progressives saw when they advocated for Armenian communities. Anny Balakian's *Armenian-Americans* details the immigrants' experiences in the U.S. after Mirak's cutoff point of World War One.[35] Earlene Carver's "On the Boundary of White: The Cartozian Naturalization Case" fleshes out the Armenian community's efforts to win a precedent-setting citizenship case and helps illustrate the anxiety these immigrants felt while standing narrowly on the knife's edge of whiteness.[36] On the international front, Peter Balakian's *The Burning Tigris*, Jay Winter's *America and the Armenian Genocide of 1915* anthology, and Richard Hovannisian's four volume *Republic of Armenia* series have been invaluable in establishing the chronology, back-story, and key figures involved with America's intricate, and at times, convoluted, attempts to help the people of Armenia following the First World War.[37]

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[34] Robert Mirak, *Torn Between Two Lands; Armenians in America, 1890 to World War I* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983).
[35] Anny Balakian, *Armenian-Americans; From Being to Feeling Armenian* (New Brunswick: Transition Publishers, 1993).
[36] Earlene Carver, "On the Boundary of White: The Cartozian Naturalization Case and the Armenians 1923-1925," Journal of American Ethnic History 28, No 2. (Winter 2009): 30-56.
[37] Peter Balakian, *The Burning Tigris: The Armenian Genocide and America's Response* (NY: HarperCollins Publishers Inc., 2003); *America and the Armenian Genocide of 1915*,ed. Jay Winter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 2003); Richard G. Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia: The First Year, 1918-1919* (Berkeley:

Throughout their works, these historians mention several individuals who play a critical role in this dissertation. Names like Alice Stone Blackwell, Henry Blackwell, Everis Hayes, John Sharpe Williams, Dr. Chester A. Rowell, and Chester H. Rowell appear in a variety of the monographs about the Armenians. Authors often describe them as “friends” or “allies” of the immigrant group, but rarely devote more than a paragraph or two to them.[38] What is striking, however, when reading works like *Torn Between Two Lands* or *The Burning Tigris*, is how many of these advocates for the Armenians considered themselves to be progressive reformers. Yet the literature on the Armenians, like the scholarship on the progressives and on the Syrian-Lebanese, does not explicitly explore the connection between progressivism and the two immigrant groups.

This dissertation bridges the fields of Middle Eastern History, Immigration History, and Whiteness Studies with the political history of the Progressive Era. My project brings needed nuance to traditional narratives about progressivism and immigration that center around the concept of exclusion. That the progressives were more of a help than a hindrance to the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians mattered deeply to tens of thousands of individuals within the two groups. First generation immigrants utilized a tremendous amount of perseverance and determination in order to prosper in the United States; their experience would have been even more difficult if the majority of reformers were actively adding to, rather than trying to lessen, the barriers in the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians’ paths.

University of California Press, 1971); Richard G. Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia: From Versailles to London, 1919-1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982); Richard G. Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia: From London to Sevres, February-August 1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996); Richard G. Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia: Between Crescent and Sickle: Partition and Sovietization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996).

[38] The exception would be Balakian’s monograph, which devotes significant attention to Alice Stone Blackwell and her contemporaries in the United Friends of Armenia. See Balakian, *The Burning Tigris*, 3-12, 13-22, 93-102.

Terminology

The terms "Syrian-Lebanese" and "Armenian" merit further elaboration. Anyone who writes about the former group's experiences has to grapple with how to refer to those immigrants who were born within the boundaries of modern-day Lebanon. Prior to World War One, the U.S. government, and many of the immigrants themselves, used the word "Syrian" as a descriptor for the group, given that Lebanon would not exist as a political entity until the creation of Greater Lebanon, an entity controlled by the French from 1920 to 1943. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, the designation of "Syrian," which referred to the Ottoman-controlled province in which Mount Lebanon resided, worked to distinguish the Arab inhabitants of the region from the Turks, but leads to confusion in the present for those who associate the word with the modern-day Syrian nation and its peoples.

Other designations for the group have their own problems. "Arabs" is a rather broad term, in that today it encompasses the Syrian-Lebanese, as well as Palestinians, Algerians, Egyptians, some Afghanis, and many other groups. Referring to the immigrants by one sect is too narrow, given that the group contained Maronites, Melkites, Orthodox Christians, Shia, Sunni, Druze, and even a small number of Protestants. Yet another option is to employ the term "Lebanese," a designation that would not have been used during the groups' first four decades in the United States. Even after the Allies created the mandate of Lebanon, some individuals in the United States still did not want to use the terms "Lebanese" or "Arabs" because they had spent so much time and effort to get the rest of America to develop positive associations with the word "Syrian."[39] Looking at the English-language presses like the *Syrian World* or the *Federation Herald* in the interwar years, readers see a variety of terms as self-descriptors, including one that splits the difference with "Syrian-Lebanese." I have also chosen to use Syrian-Lebanese, given

[39] "Editorial Comment: What's in a Name?" *Syrian World* 5, No. 1 (September 1930): 45-47.

that not all “Syrian” immigrants were Lebanese, but (prior to the 1920s) all Lebanese immigrants were “Syrian.”

As for the Armenian community in the United States, most individuals had immigrated from either the Ottoman Empire or from Russia, both of which contained sizable Armenian populations. In the late 1910s, as Russia’s hold loosened during the Bolshevik Revolution, the Armenians were able to establish the Republic of Armenia, which they formed out of the Armenian-dominated territories formerly controlled by Russia. France, Britain, and the United States provided insufficient financial and military support for the Armenian state, leaving the Armenian population in Anatolia in the hands of Turkey and the Armenian Republic to be subsumed by the Soviet Union in the early 1920s. I use the term “Armenian” primarily as an ethnic descriptor rather than to refer specifically to the citizens of the Republic of Armenia or the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic.

Organization

This work provides insights into the ways in which reformers drew the boundary line between the inclusion and exclusion of immigrant groups and the ways in which the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians walked that fine line to their own benefit. I argue that the relationship between most early twentieth century reformers and these two groups is best described as “tempered inclusion,” a concept that helps expand our understanding of progressivism and immigration beyond the existing narratives of exclusion. To illustrate various progressives’ inclusive attitude towards the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians, the dissertation contains seven additional chapters. Chapter Two traces the immigrants’ journey to the United States and explores the two groups’ socio-economic backgrounds. Chapter Three discusses the importance of the bureaucrats in the U.S. Naturalization Bureau who forced the Syrian-Lebanese and

Armenians to take legal action to defend their racial eligibility to citizenship. The fourth chapter focuses on the ways in which the immigrants and their progressive allies navigated the naturalization rulings between 1909 and 1925. The fifth chapter continues to emphasize the importance individuals and their biases held when it came to legislating at the state and federal level. Chapter Six revolves around the social and economic support provided by reformers in Boston and Fresno. Chapter Seven examines how a leading Congressional nativist came to advocate for the United States to protect the Armenians in the Middle East financially and militarily in the aftermath of World War One. The final chapter emphasizes the immigrants' experiences during the Harding Administration and the declining influence of progressive reformers in the early 1920s.

"Tempered Inclusion" examines political responses to Syrian-Lebanese and Armenian immigrants at the turn of the twentieth century. When tens of thousands of these Middle Eastern immigrants began arriving in the United States in the late 1800s, the two groups were disparaged by the popular press. Yet by the early twentieth century, these groups had moved from a place of low regard to becoming recognized as "White" middle-class citizens. The migrants' upward mobility coincided with a point in time when self-identified progressive reformers in federal and state government retooled laws that directly related to access to citizenship and the rights and privileges citizenship bestowed. This work illustrates the nuances and intricacies of Progressive Era policy-making and the far-reaching impact that officials had on the lives of everyday individuals trying to navigate life in their new country.

CHAPTER 2

BUILDING A LIFE AND A REPUTATION IN AMERICA

Facing Adversity

The Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians' journeys to America were rife with hardships. Those who made it into the United States did so by dodging disaster time and again. The typical Syrian-Lebanese or Armenian immigrant entered the country only after bribing an Ottoman official or two, surviving avaricious transportation companies and awful travel conditions, and navigating the potential pitfalls that awaited them at U.S. immigration stations. In the years surrounding the Hamidian Massacres (1894-1896), the Adana Massacre (1909), and the Armenian Genocide (1915), the journey for Armenian immigrants was even more perilous.

Once in the United States, the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians labored in their new country, watched curiously by those with whom they came in contact. The earliest individuals arrived in the 1880s and early 1890s, during which time the reaction of journalists and immigration officials towards the two groups varied between pity, curiosity, and outright hostility. In the face of these difficulties, the two groups began building lives for themselves in their new country. By the early twentieth century, many progressive reformers had become advocates of the two groups – defending the groups as "White," carving out exceptions for them in discriminatory legislation, helping the immigrants find jobs, and advocating for their social acceptance. By doing so, these progressive writers and policy-makers were breaking sharply with the rhetoric of popular newspapers in the 1880s and 1890s when large numbers of Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians first began arriving in the United States.

Leaving Home

Between the late 1800s and early 1900s, roughly one third of the population around Mt. Lebanon migrated out of the region.[1] The majority of these individuals were former farmers with little to no educational background.[2] In Syrian-Lebanese culture, a man earned his peers' respect through his ability to provide for his family by working the land he owned. By the late nineteenth century, however, Mt. Lebanon had experienced rapid population growth and contained too many men and too few properties for individuals to be able to fulfill societal expectations. A Syrian-Lebanese man could potentially work in one of the French-owned silk factories of the region, but many saw this path as dishonorable because it indicated that such a man could not provide for his family by farming his own land.[3] Instead, some Syrian-Lebanese men sent their wives, sisters, and daughters to perform industrial labor, for as Khater writes, whatever "shame that was associated with women's work in factories was counteracted by the fact that income from that work allowed men to continue their 'honorable' work in the fields."[4]

In the 1880s, America's rich reputation proved alluring to the Syrian-Lebanese. Many of the sojourners who came to the United States did so with the full intention of returning back as soon as they had earned enough money abroad to buy property in Mt. Lebanon. During the nineteenth century, the vast majority of the Syrian-Lebanese immigrating to the United States were male and either Melkites or Maronites; those coming from the broader region of Syria were more religiously diverse.[5] To finance the journey over, individuals often sold their belongings, took out loans, and mortgaged whatever land they had. The Ottoman Empire had tasked its

[1] Khater, *Inventing Home*, 8.
[2] Ibid., 1-2.
[3] Ibid., 31-32.
[4] Ibid., 37.
[5] Naff, *Becoming American*, 2.

officials with keeping its minority groups from leaving, so the Syrian-Lebanese had to save additional money in case they needed to bribe their way out of the country.[6]

Armenians trying to leave the Ottoman Empire faced even more barriers than the Syrian-Lebanese did. Unlike the residents of Mt. Lebanon, many Armenians lived in the interior of Anatolia in lands far from the coasts. The Ottoman authorities in Istanbul had levied additional restrictions against its Armenian population. During the late 1880s and early 1890s, officials "interdicted all movement of Armenians … to America by curtailing the issuance of *teskeres* (travel permits to the coast)" and individuals caught "on board European vessels were arrested, imprisoned, and beaten."[7] During the late nineteenth century, Armenians comprised a significant portion of every economic class in Turkey. There were several notable Armenian governmental officials, businessmen and financers in Istanbul and other urban centers. The Armenian middle class – smiths, weavers, builders, and other craftsmen – played an important part in the life of many Turkish cities, as did the day laborers who made up Armenia's lower class. In the more rural parts of Anatolia, Armenians worked as tradesmen and farmers, though neither group were particularly prosperous.[8]

A small number of Armenians had come to the United States throughout the early and mid- nineteenth century, but the first large exodus to the United States began in the late 1870s and early 1880s. Prior to the Hamidian Massacres of the mid 1890s, the Armenians' motivation to migrate was similar to that of the Syrian-Lebanese. For many Armenians, America looked appealing in light of the conditions they faced in the Ottoman Empire, which included high levels of taxation, food shortages, crop failures, and poor economic conditions.[9]

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[6] Khater, *Inventing Home*, 54; Naff, *Becoming American*, 80-81.
[7] Mirak, *Torn Between Two Lands*, 46.
[8] Ibid., 8-10, 15-17.
[9] Ibid., 40-42.

During the voyage from the Ottoman Empire to America, the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians were forced to deal with several entities looking to take advantage of them. Some travel brokers and steamship companies deliberately placed immigrants on ships that were not heading to the country that they had previously advertised; individuals might debark the ships in Australia or South America while assuming they had arrived in the United States.[10] European ports often served as a halfway point for Syrian-Lebanese and Armenian sojourners travelling to America. Naff writes that the immigrants were extremely vulnerable in European ports, given that they were often unfamiliar with the language, currency, customs, and regulations of the city in which they were staying.[11] Eventually individuals from within the immigrant community itself, capitalizing on their knowledge and experiences, forged their own information and business networks throughout the port cities of the Mediterranean.[12]

The last barrier the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians needed to overcome in order to enter the United States involved the country's immigration stations. For those arriving in New York, the immigrants had to make it through Castle Garden or, after 1892, Ellis Island. Individuals traveling the Atlantic in steerage class were susceptible to falling ill over the course of the journey. The most common ailment that befell the Syrian-Lebanese was a minor bacterial infection of the eyes known as trachoma. Inspectors frequently used a device known as a button hook on the immigrants, which would turn individuals' eyelids outwards as doctors checked for the ailment. Officials could bar those with trachoma from entering the country; accordingly, many immigrants were terrified that they or their loved ones would fall victim to the infection.[13]

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[10] Naff, *Becoming American*, 97.
[11] Ibid., 98.
[12] Ibid., 92-101.
[13] Alan M. Kraut, *Silent Travelers; Germs, Genes, and the "Immigration Menace"* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1994), 61-62; Amy L. Fairchild, *Science at the Borders, Immigrant Medical Inspection and the Shaping of the Modern Industrial Labor Force* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2003), 36-38; Gualtieri, *Between Arab and White*, 54-56.

“Wretched Maronite Beggars”

Syrian-Lebanese individuals who made it through Castle Garden or Ellis Island typically headed straight for Washington Street, where the earliest immigrants from their region had settled. In the late 1890s, the U.S. Industrial Commission reported “the Syrian in New York has housed himself in the tenements of the old First Ward, from which he has disposed an undesirable Irish population, the remnant of which tortures him. The tenements in this quarter are, as a rule, old and in bad condition.”[14] Over time, the Syrian-Lebanese eventually purchased much of the property along their portion of Washington Street. By the late nineteenth century, the *New York Times* made note of immigrant owned tenements and businesses throughout what they called the “Syrian Quarter,” “the Syrian Colony,” or “Little Syria.”[15]

The newspaper descriptions of the Syrian-Lebanese community on Washington Street were rife with Orientalist tropes. In *Orientalism*, Edward Said explains that those engaging in the practice contrast negative assumptions about “the Orient” with positive generalities about “the Occident.” For example, one might try to portray “the East,” as exotic, timeless, sensuous, and immoral in contrast to the familiar, advanced, and moral “West.”[16] Relying on overgeneralizations, Orientalists in academia, government, and popular culture helped cement the dichotomy between “Eastern” and “Western.” One of the recurring examples Said uses involves Napoleon’s expedition to Egypt in 1798, where the Armeé d’Orient constantly made assumptions in order to try to grasp the “essence” of the region they were occupying. “[T]o

[14] United States Industrial Commission, “Reports of the Industrial Commission on Immigration Including Testimony, with Review and Digest, and Special Reports on Education, Vol XV,” *Reports of the Industrial Commission* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1901), 444.
[15] E. Lyell Earle, “Foreign Types of New York Life.” *New York Times,* August 28, 1898; Cromwell Childe, “New York’s Syrian Quarter,” *New York Times*, August 20, 1899; “The Syrian Colony of New York and Its Characteristics,” *New York Times*, May 25, 1902; “Sights and Characters of New York’s ‘Little Syria,’” *New York Times*, March 29, 1903.
[16] Susan Nance, *How the Arabian Nights Inspired the American Dream* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2009) 3.

make out of every observable detail a generalization and out of every generalization an immutable law about the Oriental nature, temperament, mentality, custom or type … these are the features of Orientalist projection entirely realized in the *Description de l'Egypte*," Said wrote.[17]

While not exactly venturing into Egypt, the *New York Times* journalists who visited the Syrian-Lebanese settlement engaged in similar practices to the French. After touring Washington Street, writers would often use whatever details they noticed on their daytrip as evidence about the essential nature of the "Syrian" race. For example, one author over-generalized that "[t]he freshness and beauty of the Syrian girls are notable while they are still in their teens, but they are apt to age rapidly."[18] *Times* journalist E. Lyell Earle, who seems to have gotten gas after eating in the settlement, used the experience to contrast the digestive capacities of the Syrian-Lebanese with those of Americans: "a meal at one of these [restaurants] is an ordeal few Americans care to undergo …. The dishes are all seasoned so highly and are so rich in oils and fats that our plain American digestive apparatus loudly rebels against them."[19]

When the authors' experiences differed with their initial expectations, their reviews could be biting. One *Times* reporter in 1902 stated that colony's coffee, "which you expect to be good, is apt to be weird, with a pale, wan look, as [if] it were the ghost of coffee past," and also criticized the bread, describing it "as having the taste and consistency of a rather tender piece of leather."[20] The writers' descriptions of the area as a "queer little Asiatic community," or a "quaint section of town" reinforced the Orientalist paradigm of the Syrian-Lebanese as an exotic

[17] Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (NY: Random House Inc., 1979), 86.
[18] "Sights and Characters of New York's 'Little Syria,'" *New York Times*, March 29, 1903.
[19] E. Lyell Earle, "Foreign Types of New York Life." *New York Times*, August 28, 1898.
[20] "The Syrian Colony of New York and Its Characteristics," *New York Times*, May 25, 1902.

other.[21] An author writing for *Century Magazine* went even farther, describing the settlement as if it were a whole new world entirely: "a descent upon the Syrian quarters in New York is like a dream travel…. Take the Sixth Ave Elevated at Forty-second Street … and in a few minutes you are in Rector Street, walk a block westward to Washington Street, and you are in Syria."[22] The press was not alone in embracing Orientalist Stereotypes. Travelling shows, world fairs, magazine and newspaper articles, and translations of works like *Arabian Nights* instilled in many Americans a sense that the East was filled with exotic wonders.[23] The earliest Syrian-Lebanese immigrants in the United States astutely capitalized on America's Oriental fascination as an alternative to industrial labor. Though the U.S. had a high demand for unskilled workers at the time, Syrian-Lebanese men often tried to avoid seeking factory jobs.[24] Mount Lebanon's stigma of manufacturing work as "feminine" led many immigrants to seek employment elsewhere. Enterprising Syrian-Lebanese individuals took up long distance pack peddling, selling exotic "artifacts" from "the Orient" in communities across America.[25]

The *New York Times* reacted quite negatively to the immigrants' attempts to peddle trinkets. On May 25, 1890, the paper produced a lengthy article entitled '"Sanctified' Arab tramps: Wretched Maronite Beggars Infesting this Country." The article's opening paragraph set the tone right away, as the writer placed the Syrian-Lebanese below Italian and Chinese immigrants on the racial hierarchy of desirability. "In many respects," the author wrote, "they are inferior to the Chinese and Italians, who do possess a certain amount of self-respect, and are willing to work honestly and work hard for a living." The *Times* referred to the peddlers as

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[21] "The Syrian Colony of New York and Its Characteristics," *New York Times*, May 25, 1902; "Sights and Characters of New York's 'Little Syria,'" *New York Times*, March 29, 1903.
[22] Conrad Bercovici quoted in Gaultieri, *Between Arab and White*, 48.
[23] Nance, *How the Arabian Nights Inspired the American Dream*, 1-18.
[24] Naff, *Becoming American*,179, 229.
[25] Alixa Naff, "Arabs in America: A Historical Overview" in *Arabs in the New World: Studies on Arab-American Communities*, ed. Sameer Y. Abraham and Nabeel Abraham (Detroit: Wayne State University Center for Urban Studies, 1983), 16.

“expert mendicant[s],” and “professional Syrian tramps.” The author also tried to attack the immigrants as perverting the fundamentals of Christianity in an effort to keep the group on the margins of American society:

> During Christ’s public life for three years, they say, He did not work for himself, and taught that man should not worry about the morrow, and He subsisted on the gifts of kind-hearted people and prayed. What doctrine could be more welcome to people naturally indolent and not endowed by nature with any breadth of intellect? Prayer to them, consisting of repetitions of certain formulas and crossings, was easy. To live as a parasite on others in this world and then to enjoy eternal bliss among the angels in heaven for living such a life below was preferable to the Mohammeden doctrine that the way to paradise lies under the shadow of swords. And so the Maronite takes kindly to this doctrine, as a frog takes to a pond.[26]

The reports of the U.S. Industrial Commission, which was established in 1898 to investigate the health of America’s manufacturing industries, echoed many of the same sentiments of the *Times*. It described the Syrian-Lebanese as “unstable,” “too versatile,” and “constitutionally indolent.” The average “Syrian” immigrant, the commissioners wrote, “tends to restrict his energies to the nomadic and parasitic pursuits rather than those truly useful to the community.”[27]

When Syrian-Lebanese pack peddlers could afford to do so, they moved from selling trinkets to providing basic household necessities like lace, linens, utensils, tools, and other items. The earliest Syrian-Lebanese peddlers set up wholesale stores in New York City and equipped a new wave of individuals to go door to door in America’s towns and cities selling dry goods. Peddlers would leave New York with as many items as they could cram into a suitcase or a pack; eventually, when an individual earned enough money, he or she could invest in a wagon and sell larger manufactured goods.

Long distance pack peddling was not for the faint of heart. Jewish immigrants, who preceded the Syrian-Lebanese in the long-distance pack peddling industry, were the only other

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[26] “Sanctified Arab Tramps,” *New York Times*, May 25, 1890.
[27] United States Industrial Commission, “Reports of the Industrial Commission on Immigration,” 442.

immigrant group who participated in the practice on a wide-scale.[28] Peddlers often travelled individually through rural areas, leaving them extremely vulnerable should they fall prey to robbers or sick to disease. In order to find shelter at nights or during inclement weather, the Syrian-Lebanese were dependent on the kindness of strangers to allow them to stay in their houses or barns. Additionally, those individuals who began peddling soon after their arrival in the United States had to overcome language barriers that initially kept them from communicating easily with their customers.[29]

To the Syrian-Lebanese, however, the benefits of peddling outweighed its costs. Specifically, peddling was lucrative. Naff estimates that, by living frugally on the road, a long-distance pack peddler could made an average of $1,000 a year while American laborers typically earned around $650 annually.[30] Peddlers could use the profits they had received to return home and purchase property in Mount Lebanon, or they could put the money to use bringing over family members to America. Either way, the profitability of peddling led to more Syrian-Lebanese people coming to the United States, as the success of those who returned prompted additional individuals to immigrate. Approximately three quarters of the immigrant community's women worked as peddlers and experienced a great deal of success.[31] They "could more easily gain access into homes than men … and were more trusted by their customers, thus developing lasting clienteles which, in many cases, grew into friendships."[32] Their success, as Naff notes, played a strong role in strengthening the Syrian-Lebanese community in the United States:

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[28] Hasia Diner, *Roads Taken: The Great Jewish Migrations to the New World and the Peddlers Who Forged the Way* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015), 10-11.
[29] Khater, *Inventing Home*, 76-78.
[30] Naff, "Lebanese Immigration into the United States," 147.
[31] Ibid., 178.
[32] Ibid., 177.

> The earnings of wives, mothers, daughters, and sisters, their sacrifices and labor … enabled the family to improve and accelerate economic and social positions.… Their collective earnings helped convey the impression of success enjoyed by Syrians during the peddling era and later. Because of them, more capital was accumulated, more small businesses started, more independence gained, more money sent to the homeland, and more fares remitted to bring relatives to the United States.[33]

Around the turn of the century, the practice of peddling began its decline amongst the immigrants.[34] The Syrian-Lebanese had earned enough money to buy or rent property, operating dry goods stores and other family-run businesses. As one contemporary wrote:

> In America they are often peddlers first. Afterwards some become leaders in the silk, fine white goods and rug trade. A number of kimono and lace factories are owned by them. They have also made good in the candy and grocery business. Many are skilled silk weavers.… [T]hey have shunned the hard muscular work such as construction and mining. Some are professional men; a few are farmers; in short, there are some in nearly every vocation. [35]

Permanent Syrian-Lebanese communities began to take root across the United States as the immigrants considered making a permanent home in the new country.

Like the Syrian-Lebanese, most Armenian immigrants' journey in America began in the Northeast. A large number of the group worked in factories, but many Armenians left the industry as soon as they could afford to do so in order to pursue other opportunities. Knowing that they might never return to Turkey, many in the Armenian community were willing to put the entirety of their savings to use in order to start their own businesses in the U.S. Mirak writes that "many of the businessmen had no earlier experience in the specific trade they followed in the United States," but they "opened these stores because the work in them was less physically demanding and more remunerative than factory labor."[36]

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[33] Ibid., 178-179.
[34] Naff, *Becoming American*, 12.
[35] Thomas Burgess, *Foreigners or Friends, A Handbook; The Churchman's Approach to the Foreign-Born and their Children* (New York: Department of Missions and Church Extension, 1921), 149.
[36] Mirak, *Torn Between Two Lands*, 93.

Another possibility for those leaving factory work behind involved purchasing land to start their farms, orchards, and vineyards. One of the areas of the country that developed a significant Armenian presence was Fresno, located in the San Joaquin Valley of California. The area was agriculturally rich, but relatively underdeveloped. Dozens of Armenian families began arriving in the early 1880s, seeking to purchase property in and around Fresno. By the mid-1890s, hundreds of Armenian individuals lived in Fresno County.[37] The Armenians "outbid each other and the more aggressive of the Japanese by sinking their entire savings – and incurring large debts – to secure the most profitable land available."[38] The Armenians typically devoted whatever money they had into their business activities rather than their living quarters. As their maxim went, "no house can produce a farm, but a good farm can produce a house." Consequently, one critique leveled against the Armenian immigrants was that they enjoyed a low standard of living. In reality, the first generation was seeking to build an economic foundation so that their children and grandchildren could prosper in the United States. By the early 1900s, the Armenian community in Fresno experienced a high degree of success, with various immigrant families owning thousands of acres of land, along with dozens of packinghouses and other businesses.[39]

In 1911, the federal government issued the reports and recommendations of the U.S. Immigration Commission, which had spent an enormous amount of time and resources investigating the various immigrant groups in the United States. Their findings, published across forty-one volumes, contained several pieces of information about the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians that progressive-era policy-makers would find appealing. For example, the commission found that, of the immigrant groups they surveyed in the north Atlantic states, the

[37] Ibid., 112.
[38] Ibid., 114.
[39] Ibid. 115-116.

Armenians were amongst the most literate peoples. Of the 103 Armenian immigrants interviewed, 94.2 percent could read and 92.2 percent could both read and write. Their literacy rate was comparable to that of the northern and western European immigrant groups they had surveyed and significantly higher than that of groups from southern and eastern Europe.[40] The commission also reported that in Fresno, the Armenians were less likely than "Mexicans, Italians, Portuguese, and German Russians … to leave school early in order to begin work or because of deficiencies due to irregular attendance."[41] Mirak writes that the group placed a high priority on schooling: "for them education and advancement were natural corollaries. *Tbrots kna vor mart ellas* (go to school to be a man) was a common immigrant injunction."[42]

The Syrian-Lebanese, on the other hand, stood out most when it came to their fluency in English. One of the effects of long-distance pack peddling was that, the better their language skills, the more likely they were to make sales. Peddling created an environment where there was an immediate incentive to learn the nuances of Americans' languages and customs. As Naff argues in *Becoming American*, "until a comparable body of data is assembled to the contrary, peddling must be held to be the major factor in explaining the relatively rapid assimilation of Arabic speaking immigrants before World War I."[43]

The Dillingham Commission, which compiled an extensive series of reports on immigration, examined almost 1500 immigrants from France, Germany, northern and southern Italy, Lithuania, Poland, and Syria. They found that among the most recent immigrants – those who had been in the country four years or fewer – "Syrians" were the second-most fluent in

[40] United States Immigration Commission. "Immigrants in Industry; Part 3: Cotton Goods Manufacturing in the North Atlantic States," *Reports of the Immigration Commission* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1911), 143.
[41] Reports of the U.S. Immigration Commission quoted in Mirak, *Torn Between Two Lands*, 272.
[42] Mirak, *Torn Between Two Lands*, 272.
[43] Naff, *Becoming American*, 1.

English with approximately 60 percent able to speak the language. French immigrants ranked third in English literacy with approximately 30 percent fluency. For Syrians who had been in the country between five to nine years, their fluency rate was at nearly 75 percent. For those who had been the United States for ten or more years, slightly over 86 percent could speak English. In each category, Syrian immigrants possessed a higher rate of fluency than did Italians, Lithuanians, and Poles.[44] When the commissioners focused exclusively women, they found that, on average, 22 percent of female immigrants could speak English. In contrast, the reports found that approximately 29 percent of Syrian women were fluent.[45]

In addition to literacy and fluency rates, the Dillingham Commission emphasized the desirability of immigrants who chose to live in the United States rather than come for a few years, make money, and return back to their home countries. "The old immigration came to be a part of the country," the Commission argued, "while the new, in large measure, comes with the intention of profiting, in a pecuniary way, by the superior advantages of the new world and then returning to the old country."[46] Part of their resentment towards immigrations who participated in return migration was that it seemed to be a clear indicator that such individuals never intended to assimilate into the U.S. The Commissioners, along with most of the era's officials, were fixated with the question of assimilation. Theodore Roosevelt encapsulated policy-makers' attitudes about the matter in 1919 when he stated:

> we should insist that if the immigrant who comes here in good faith becomes an American and assimilates himself to us, he shall be treated on an exact equality with everyone else, for it is an outrage to discriminate against any such man because of creed,

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[44] United States Immigration Commission. "Immigrants in Industry; Part 4: Woolen and Wursted Goods Manufacturing." *Reports of the Immigration Commission* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1911), 736.
[45] Ibid., 737.
[46] United States Immigration Commission, "Abstracts of Reports of the Immigration Commission with Conclusions and Recommendations and Views of the Minority, Volume One," 14.

> or birthplace, or origin. But this is predicated upon the person's becoming in every facet an American, and nothing but an American.[47]

When estimating the percentage of each immigrant group who engaged in return migration, the Commissioners found that roughly 32 percent of European immigrants chose not to remain in the U.S.; whereas they placed the departure rate for the Syrian Lebanese and Armenians at 28 and 11 percent, respectively.[48] By the early twentieth century, the two groups' occupational and educational choices had left them well positioned to navigate the biases of the era's policy-makers. During the Progressive Era, the most pressing legal challenge the immigrants faced involved the question of whether or not they were racially eligible to become U.S. citizens.

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[47] Theodore Roosevelt quoted in Members of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, *The World War: Utterances Concerning Its Issues and Conduct* (NY: The American Academy of Arts and Letters, 1919), 44.

[48] United States Immigration Commission, "Abstracts of Reports of the Immigration Commission with Conclusions and Recommendations and Views of the Minority, Volume One," 182.

CHAPTER 3

CLAIMING A RIGHT TO NATURALIZE

§2169 of the Revised Statutes

Between 1909 and 1925, the U.S. government forced the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians to defend their racial eligibility to citizenship in court. The provision the groups needed to satisfy was §2169 of the Revised Statutes, which mandated a racial prerequisite to citizenship by limiting naturalization to free "White" persons of good moral character. The first U.S. Congress had devised the statute back in 1790 and had only expanded the racial eligibility requirement once. In 1870, Congress revised the policy, often referred to as §2169 of the Revised Statutes, to allow individuals of "African nativity" or "African descent" to naturalize, but by not dropping the racial requirement altogether, legislators intentionally left Asian immigrants vulnerable to exclusion.[1] Over the next few decades, various circuit and district courts interpreted the racial prerequisite to citizenship as preventing immigrants from Eastern Asia, such as the Chinese and Japanese, from naturalizing.[2] The Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians continued to naturalize up into the early twentieth century, but it only took the action of one federal official to throw the matter of their eligibility into question.

That individual was Richard K. Campbell, head of the Naturalization Division within the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization. Convinced that the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians lacked the civic values necessary for American citizenship, Campbell sought to prevent individuals of the two groups from being able to complete the naturalization process. His

[1] López, *White by Law*, 43-44.
[2] *In re Ah Yup*, 1 F. Cas. 223 (C.C.D. Cal. 1878); *In re Hong Yen Chang*, 84 Cal. 163, 24 Pac. 156 (1890); *In re Saito*, 62 F. 126 (C.C. D. Mass. 1894); *In re Gee Hop*, 71 F. 274 (N.D. Cal. 1895); *re Yamashita* 30 Wash. 234, 70 Pac. 482 (1902); *In re Buntaro Kumagai*, 163 F. 992 (W.D. Wash. 1908).

intervention pushed the matter into the legal system, forcing the immigrants to litigate their Whiteness before U.S. District Courts. Throughout 1909 and into the 1910s, the two groups were largely successful, winning the majority of their reported cases. By the 1920s, Campbell had retired. His assistant and fellow reformer, Raymond Crist, assumed Campbell's office but not his views regarding the Syrian-Lebanese or Armenians' racial eligibility to citizenship. Confident in his interpretation that the two groups should be able to naturalize as White persons, Crist used his influence to convince high-ranking officials within the U.S. Commerce and Justice departments of the need to run test cases against the immigrants in order to secure a definitive ruling from the Supreme Court.

It is easy to generalize bureaucrats as faceless and indistinguishable, as parts of a vast machine who possess little to no individuality or autonomy. The story behind Campbell and Crist's actions towards the two immigrant groups show that their biases dramatically affected both policy-making and the lives of the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians. Leaders within the immigrant community were well aware of these individuals' importance and tailored their arguments accordingly. This chapter calls attention to figures like Campbell and Crist, exploring how their prejudices shaped policy. It also shows how Syrian-Lebanese and Armenian activists sought to sway the two officials. This chapter focuses on the administrators' decision-making process and the immigrants' efforts "behind the scenes," whereas the subsequent chapter will examine the racial prerequisite cases themselves and the more public efforts of the immigrants and their allies to cement the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians as "White."

The Origins of the Naturalization Division

In the seminal work *The Search for Order*, Robert Wiebe described a "broad pattern" when it came to Progressive Era reform movements, one characterized by "initial efforts to

impose a crude order, the desire for regularity and predictability, the need for a government of continuous involvement, and the emphasis upon executive administration."[3] The Naturalization Division, which came into existence as part of the 1906 Basic Naturalization Act, fit Wiebe's description to a tee. After the passage of the legislation, President Theodore Roosevelt appointed Campbell to lead the Naturalization Division, one of the two agencies that formed the Immigration and Naturalization Bureau in the Department of Commerce and Labor.[4] The broader purpose of Campbell's division and of the Basic Naturalization Act itself was to standardize the naturalization process. Since 1790, Congress had allowed "any court of record" the authority to grant immigrants citizenship; according to Marian Smith, the head of the Historical Research Branch at the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, over five thousand courts were involved in naturalization proceedings. Smith writes that this myriad of courts relied solely on case law since "there was no central or national authority to answer judges' questions regarding the finer points of naturalization law or procedure."[5] In response to the lack of uniformity, the 1906 legislation limited naturalization proceedings to district and circuit courts and created the Naturalization Division, which developed into a far-reaching bureaucracy.[6]

In addition to focusing on standardization, one of the other agendas underlying the 1906 statute involved organizing naturalization proceedings so that urban political machines could not exploit the process.[7] Progressives frequently inveighed against both big city bosses and their supporters in immigrant communities, blaming both entities for machine politicians' tendency to provide newly-arrived Europeans with bribes and favors while guiding them – sometimes

[3] Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order, 1877-1920* (NY: Hill and Wang, 1967), 228-229.
[4] U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, "Richard K. Campbell," https://www.uscis.gov/history-and-genealogy/our-history-3 (accessed June 29, 2017).
[5] Marian L. Smith, "Race, Nationality, and Reality: INS Administration of Racial Provisions in U.S. Immigration and Nationality Law since 1898, Part 1," *Prologue* 34, No. 2 (Summer 2002): https://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2002/summer/immigration-law-2.html (accessed July 20, 2017).
[6] Gualtieri, *Between Arab and White*, 53.
[7] Gualtieri, *Between Arab and White*, 53; Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, 118.

fraudulently – through the naturalization process.[8] Consequently, the 1906 legislation prohibited naturalization courts form granting citizenship to immigrants within thirty days of a general election, added additional requirements for petitioners to fulfill, and fined clerks and officers who violated any of the statute's provisions.[9]

In the years surrounding the question of the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians' racial status, several progressive nativists assumed the two groups were politically corrupt. For example, a month before the naturalization bill passed in 1906, Senator Furnifold Simmons described the Syrian-Lebanese as a threat to the political health of the United States. In a speech from the floor of the Senate, he mentioned "Syrians" twice: once alongside Greeks, Poles, Hungarians, Southern Italians, and the Portuguese as groups from "Southern and Eastern Europe" and once with Poles, Hungarians, and Italians as "the scum and rift raft of Europe."[10] The senator alleged that the recently arrived European immigrants

> are a different people from those who are to-day in the forefront of world progress. They belong, in the main, to a different civilization from that represented by the Anglo-Saxon race. Their surroundings, in the main, have not been calculated to train or fit them for the standard of citizenship which obtained in this country, and which we must maintain if we are to safeguard and perpetuate our free institutions. In the main they are unfitted not only by heredity and training for the high duties and responsibilities of American citizenship, but the majority of them are so ignorant, not to say sinister, as to preclude the hope of their becoming good and desirable citizens in the future.[11]

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[8] Pula, "The Progressives, the Immigrant, and the Workplace," 58; Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform*, 184-185; Richard K. Scher, *The Politics of Disenfranchisement: Why is it so Hard to Vote in America?* (NY: Routledge, 2015), 83. The writings of Edward A. Ross, particularly *The Old World in the New*, serve as a useful example of this progressive tendency. See Ross, *The Old World in the New: The Significance of Past and Present Immigration to the American People* (NY: The Century Co., 1913), 259-281. Scholars like Hofstadter and John D. Bunker have pointed out that the progressives' rhetoric did not always match the reality of politics in that reformers and machine politicians supported similar legislation when their interests aligned. See Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform*, 185-186 and John D. Buenker, *Urban Liberalism and Progressive Reform* (NY: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1978), 47, 77-79.

[9] "An Act To establish a Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization and to provide for a uniform rule for the naturalization of aliens throughout the United States," Public Law 358, 59th Cong., 1st sess. (June 29, 1906): 596.

[10] Furnifold M. Simmons, "Speech of Hon. F.M. Simmons, of North Carolina, in the Senate of the United States, Wednesday, May 23, 1906" (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1906), 6, 14.

[11] Ibid., 6.

Whereas Northern Europeans, Simmons argued, "[b]y heredity and training… understand the principles of freedom and of government by the people. They were fitted to become good citizens of the Republic."[12] For Simmons, the type of government in the immigrants' former countries – their "surroundings" and their "training" – dictated their fitness for citizenship and served as a convenient rationalization for attempts to limit the new-comers in number and in political power.

Progressive scholars like Edward Ross lent academic support to Simmons' position. Due far more to his faith in the United States than in the immigrants themselves, Ross half-heartedly believed that "the cheap stucco manikins from Southeastern Europe" could be assimilated eventually, writing of the effect that "our electrifying ozone works in the dull, fat-witted immigrant."[13] "The inrush from these lesser breeds," he wrote, "has not stayed the march of industry or science or education."[14] Instead, like Simmons, Ross felt that the immigrants would wreak havoc at the polling booth:

> It is in our politics that the sag is most evident…. The higher types of men are prompted to act together, because they believe in the same principle or love the same ideal. The inferior pull together from clannishness or allegiance to a leader. The growing disposition to rally about persons and the rising value of the saloonkeeper, the ex-pugilist and the boss in controlling city voters would indicate that the electorate has been debased by the too free admission of political incapables.[15]

To Ross, these immigrant groups had grown politically degraded in their countries of birth and were now corroding America's civic life. They were, in his estimation, the "the beaten members of beaten breeds," a description he applied to six immigrant groups in the United States.[16] Four

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[12] Ibid., 5.
[13] Edward Alsworth Ross, *Foundations of Sociology* (NY: The Macmillan Co., 1910), 391, 392. Ross' assessment of the Southern and Eastern Europeans' capacity to assimilate grew more negative throughout the 1910s. See Julius Weinberg, "E.A. Ross: The Progressive as Nativist," *The Wisconsin Magazine of History* 50, No. 3 (Spring 1967): 246-247.
[14] Ross, *The Foundations of Sociology*, 393.
[15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid.

were from Southern Europe – Croats and Dalmatians, Sicilians and Slovaks – the type of individuals who intellectuals like Ross or Madison Grant saw as mentally and morally inferior to "Anglo-Saxons," but were nonetheless "White" by law due to their geographic origins in Europe.[17]

The remaining "beaten members of beaten breeds" on Ross' list were the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians, peoples whose birthplaces in Western Asia placed them in a "racial borderlands" between Yellow, White, and Black.[18] Their "in-between" status left the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians particularly vulnerable to unfavorable interpretations of naturalization law. For Richard Campbell and the Naturalization Division, their raison d'être was to standardize and oversee the citizenship process, moving naturalization proceedings away from the reach of bosses and those "unfit" to participate in America's democracy. Campbell could not easily prevent all of Simmons' "scum and riffraff" from Eastern Europe or Ross' "beaten members of beaten breeds" from Italy and the Balkans from naturalizing, but he could try to bar all persons from the geographical confines of Asia from citizenship under §2169.

Under Campbell's direction, in 1906 the Naturalization Division established a regulation for the nation's clerks of court, titled "Rule 21," that they "shall not receive declarations of intention (Form 2202) or file petitions for naturalization (Form 2204) from other aliens than white persons and persons of African nativity or of African descent."[19] When applying for citizenship, immigrants needed to submit a form declaring their intention to naturalize to a clerk of court, before embarking on a five-year residency period. Sometimes called first papers,

[17] Weinberg, "E.A. Ross," 245-248; Gualtieri, *Between Arab and White,* 54. Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform,* 179-180.
[18] Janice Okoomian also uses the framework of "racial borderlands" when discussing the Armenians legal situation in 1909 and 1925. Okoomian, "Becoming White: Contested History, Armenian American Women, and Racialized Bodies," *Society for the Study of the Multi-Ethnic Literature of the United States* 27, No. 1 (Spring 2002), 217.
[19] Report, Richard K. Campbell to William B. Wilson, March 22, 1913, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/43, National Archives, Washington D.C.

Campbell referred to the document for applicants' declaration of intent as "Form 2202." After meeting the five year residency requirement, eligible immigrants could go before circuit or district courts to file petitions for naturalization - their second papers, or "Form 2204."

Rule 21, however, only mentioned "white persons and persons of African nativity or of African descent." Campbell's 1906 regulation did not explicitly mention the Syrian Lebanese or Armenians or any other "race" of petitioners he wanted to exclude, so members of the two groups continued to acquire citizenship with little difficulty. If a clerk rejected a petitioner, the stated reason rested upon the immigrant's individual characteristics rather than the person's race.[20] Starting in 1908, Campbell began upon a more aggressive course. Whenever an immigrant from India submitted his declaration of intent, Campbell sent instructions to federal attorneys to oppose the individual's naturalization petition because he felt the people of India were not "White" and were therefore not eligible to citizenship. Within a year, he was taking similar action against individuals from the Ottoman Empire – including Turkish, Armenian, Syrian-Lebanese, Jewish, and Palestinian immigrants – as well.[21]

Campbell had the power to interrupt an individual's naturalization proceedings, but his authority was limited to directing federal attorneys to argue his interpretation of the law. The ultimate decision as to who was or was not "White" under §2169 of the United States Revised Statutes remained up to individual district and circuit court judges.[22] Should a judge deny an immigrant's eligibility under §2169, the individual could appeal the case in the federal judicial system, potentially all the way up to the U.S. Supreme Court. Campbell was confident that

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[20] William C. Sherman, Paul L. Whitney, John Guerrero, *Prairie Peddlers: The Syrian-Lebanese in North Dakota* (Bismarck, ND: University of Mary Press, 2002), 194-196; Gualtieri, *Between Arab and White*, 53.
[21] Marian L. Smith, "Race, Nationality, and Reality: INS Administration of Racial Provisions in U.S. Immigration and Nationality Law since 1898, Part 2," *Prologue* 34, No. 2 (Summer 2002): https://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2002/summer/immigration-law-2.html (accessed July 20, 2017).
[22] Smith, "Race, Nationality, and Reality: Part Two."

judges would see the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians in the same light that he did, leaving the immigrant groups outside the boundaries of Whiteness and U.S. citizenship.[23] He knew his intervention would force the dispute to the courts and hoped that a case would rise far enough that a precedent-setting ruling would cement the immigrants' ineligibility.[24]

Despite the rhetoric of figures like Simmons and Ross, it is difficult to assess the extent to which the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians engaged in machine politics. Using oral history interviews, Naff provides a few examples of Syrian-Lebanese immigrants who traded their votes in exchange for favors, primarily in the Midwest.[25] She argues that while "small town ward bosses" took interest in the Syrian-Lebanese, they "could not, however, be relied on to vote as an ethnic block."[26] One of the group's contemporaries indicated that Syrian-Lebanese communities had trouble uniting in support of individual candidates because of a tendency to split along the lines of their religious sects.[27]

An example from New York City, where the Syrian-Lebanese were most concentrated and most numerous, demonstrates the group's lack of facility with machine politics during the Progressive Era. In 1910, Anton Simon, a Syrian-Lebanese merchant from Brooklyn, ran for the state senate as a Republican against an Irish Democrat by the name of Barth Cronin.[28] Simon was one of the earliest Syrian-Lebanese individuals to run for office in the United States.[29] A staunch Roosevelt supporter, he advocated for several progressive measures: greater

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[23] Richard K. Campbell to Charles Beatty, July 19, 1909, quoted in "Cannot be Naturalized," *Springfield Daily Republican*, October 21, 1909.
[24] Smith, "Race, Nationality, and Reality, Part 2."
[25] Naff, *Becoming American*, 254-255.
[26] Alixa Naff, "Lebanese Immigrants to the United States: 1880 to the Present" in *The Lebanese in the World: A Century of Emigration* ed. Albert Hourani and Nadim Shehadi (Oxford: The Centre for Lebanese Studies in Association with I.B. Tauris and Co Ltd, 1992), 155.
[27] Louise Seymour Houghton, "The Syrian as an American Citizen," *The Survey* XXVII (October 1911-March 1912): 962.
[28] Houghton, "The Syrian as an American Citizen," 962; *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, November 2, 1910, 2.
[29] Houghton, "The Syrian as an American Citizen," 962.

conservation of the state's natural resources, the establishment of an income tax, a statewide direct primary system, and, as the candidate put it, an "effort to drive out corruption in politics and to dissolve the union between corrupt politics and corrupt business."[30] Both Simon's rhetoric and the result of the election suggest he was not a part of an effective political machine. During the general election in 1910, fifty-one total New York senate races took place, yet Simon's Democratic opponent won by the largest margin of any state senate candidate that cycle.[31]

As for the Armenians, the immigrants did not operate as an ethnic voting bloc nationally or even at the state level.[32] At the local level, Mirak writes that they stayed "aloof" from both the Republican and Democratic organizations but forayed into politics if a candidate friendly to their community was on the ballot.[33] In Fresno, California, the Armenian population aligned themselves with two progressive figures, Chester H. Rowell and his uncle, Dr. Chester A. Rowell, the second of whom ran under the platform of municipal reform as a Republican in his successful mayoral races.[34] During Roosevelt's 1912 presidential run, Chester H. Rowell told the secretary of the Progressive Party National Committee that, as far as his community went, "the Armenians are all with us and their newspaper is enthusiastically supporting us."[35] In 1920, after Rowell sold the *Republican*, the editor and manager of *Asbarez*, an Armenian weekly paper in Fresno, praised the reformer for his "indomitable efforts in furthering liberal and progressive

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[30] Anton Simon quoted in Houghton, "The Syrian as an American Citizen," 962.
[31] Edgar L. Murlin, *The New York Redbook Containing the Portraits and Biographies of the United States Senators, Governor, State Officers and Members of the Legislature; also with the portraits of Judges and Court Reporters, the New Constitution of the State, Election and Population Statistics, and General Facts of Interest* (Albany: J.B. Lyon Company Publishers, 1912), 99-100, 700-703. According to Murlin's statistics, Simon lost to Cronin, 16,897 to 9,032 and received 3,134 fewer votes than did Cronin's 1908 opponent, a Republican with the last name of Schneeman.
[32] Mirak, *Torn Between Two Lands*, 283.
[33] Ibid., 284.
[34] Mirak, *Torn Between Two Lands*, 284; Lon Kurashige, "Immigration, Race, and the Progressives," in *A Companion to California History*, ed. William Deverell and David Igler (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2014) 281.
[35] Chester H. Rowell to O.K. Davis, September 20, 1912, Chester H. Rowell Papers, BANC MSS C-B 401, Box 1, Folder "1912, July-Dec.," The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

ideas" and his support of "the purification of the American politic from the domination of party machines."[36] Finally it is worth noting that around the turn of the century, both the Syrian-Lebanese and the Armenians tended to avoid the Democratic Party, which many contemporaries saw as the party of European immigrants and Irish Catholic ward bosses.[37] After the mid-1890s, many Armenians grew hostile towards the Democratic Party due to Grover Cleveland's inaction during Hamidian Massacres, whereas a large number of the Syrian-Lebanese preferred the GOP because they saw it as the best party for their commercial interests.[38]

Integrating Progressivism and Orientalism

While the evidence is mixed as to the degree to which the two groups engaged with urban machines, fears of political corruption were clearly on Campbell's mind. After the rumor spread that the Syrian-Lebanese community in Michigan City, Indiana had aligned with the town's bosses, Campbell singled out one of the immigrants, writing that he would try to prevent him from naturalizing if he proceeded further than taking out his first papers.[39] Yet in order to exclude the greatest number of immigrants from India and the Ottoman Empire from citizenship, Campbell needed to operate under the boundaries of §2169 of naturalization law and interweave his political concerns with the issues of race and color. One can see the head of the Naturalization Division's efforts to racialize the question of petitioners' fitness for citizenship in his letters to Andrew J. Balliet and Charleton R. Beatty, the two U.S. attorneys who questioned

[36] A. Khederian and T. Charshafjian to Chester H. Rowell, October 14, 1920, Chester H. Rowell Papers, BANC MSS C-B 401, Box 8, Folder "Miscellaneous Correspondence - A," The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.
[37] Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, 60.
[38] Mirak, *Torn Between Two Lands*, 284; United States Industrial Commission, "Reports of the Industrial Commission on Immigration Including Testimony, with Review and Digest, and Special Reports on Education," *Reports of the Industrial Commission* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1901) 442.
[39] "When White is Not White," *The State*, October 20, 1909; "Turning Down the Turks," *Ocala Evening Star*, October 8, 1909.

Campbell's interpretation.[40] His correspondence with the two attorneys helps piece together Campbell's thinking as to why he felt the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians were neither "White" nor fit for citizenship.

In 1790, Campbell said, when the U.S. initially limited naturalization to free White persons, Congress understood Whiteness as the easiest term for identifying "those of similar ideals, training and aspirations with those who had established this government."[41] To be "White," in Campbell's eyes, was to hold to common political standards, such as embracing the "philosophy of the individual rights of man."[42] He made sure to note that "Yellowness" was not tied to a skin color per se, but served to mark

> people who are wholly different, if not in origin at least in their political and moral ideals, their age-long training, and their form of government, social, religious, and political, it is conspicuous and shows them to be so diverse from white people or Occidentals as to make it no less a risk to admit them to citizenship than it would confessedly be to admit Chinese, Japanese, Malays and others as to whom it is by general consent believed that the doors of naturalization should be closed.[43]

Campbell alleged that Turkey had strictly maintained its "original" religious, political, and social structures – structures fundamentally different to those of the U.S.[44] Thus, its residents were Asiatics "in a very essential sense," constituting "an element of danger" if they "entered in any large numbers into the body politic of the United States."[45] The difference between races was so blatantly obvious, Campbell asserted, that anyone could see it, for even "without being able to

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[40] Campbell eventually gave Beatty permission not to seek a decision in the court system as to whether or not the Syrian-Lebanese were "White" after the attorney made it clear that he felt Campbell's interpretation was incorrect. Richard K. Campbell to Charleton R. Beatty, October 27, 1909, quoted in Justin S. Kirreh to Charles Nagel, November 1, 1909, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/43, National Archives, Washington D.C.
[41] Richard Campbell to Charleton R. Beatty, July 19, 1909, quoted in "Why the Turk is not a White Man," *Fresno Morning Republican*, September 27, 1909.
[42] Richard Campbell to Charleton R. Beatty, undated, quoted in "Why the Turk is not a White Man," *Fresno Morning Republican*, September 27, 1909.
[43] Richard Campbell to Andrew J. Balliet, undated, quoted in "Why the Turk is not a White Man," *Fresno Morning Republican*, September 27, 1909.
[44] Richard Campbell to Charleton R. Beatty, undated, quoted in "Why the Turk is not a White Man," *Fresno Morning Republican*, September 27, 1909.
[45] Ibid.

define a white person, the average man in the street understands distinctly what it means and would find no difficulty in assigning to the yellow race a Turk or Syrian with as much ease as he would bestow that designation on a Chinaman or Korean."[46]

The formulation the head of the Naturalization Division used is relatively simple. Like Simmons, Campbell argued that his homeland's civilization and form of government was ideologically superior to all others, then asserted that those he wished to exclude came from rigidly-controlling, inherantly-different countries. Thus, the immigrants' prior experience is so dissimilar it would be foolish to allow them to participate in the nation's democracy. And, by tying an group's fitness for citizenship to "heredity," and "color," individuals like Campbell could argue that "new" immigrants would not and could not significantly improve their capacity for republican ideology over time, so limiting them from the body politic was the safest option.

Campbell's argument bears a strong resemblence to Orientalist discources meant to justify European colonialism. Given Orientalism's rigid binaries between "East" and "West," it is not surprising Campbell would draw from the very deep well of European rationalizations when trying to contrast "white people or Occidentals" with immigrants from India and the Ottoman Empire. For example, in 1910 the former British Prime Minister, Arthur Balfour, gave a speech on the floor of Parliament that touched on many of the same themes as Campbell's letters. Speaking as to why he felt it was proper for the English to govern Egypt, Balfour asserted that "Western nations as soon as they emerge into history show the beginnings of those capacities for self-government." But when it came to the East, he alleged,

> you may look through the whole history of the Orientals … and you never find traces of self-government…. Conquerer has succeeded conqueror; one domination has followed another; but never in all the revolutions of fate and fortune have you seen one of those

[46] Richard Campbell to Charleton R. Beatty, July 19, 1909, quoted in "Why the Turk is not a White Man," *Fresno Morning Republican*, September 27, 1909.

> nations on its own motion establish what we, from a Western point of view, call self-government.[47]

To Balfour, the Occident possessed a superior instinct for governing than did the Orient; as such, it was in the best interest of all invovled for England to maintain control and curb Egyptians' involvement in their own political affairs:

> Is it a good thing for these great nations – I admit their greatness – that this absolute government should be exercised by us? I think it is a good thing. I think that experience shows that they have got under it far better government than in the whole history of the world they ever had before, and which not only is a benefit to them, but is undoubtedly a benefit to the whole of the civilised West…."[48]

While the former prime minister paid lip service to Egypt's past acheivements, he and Campbell both relied on the familiar Orientalist trope that East and West were fundamentally different, in this case, in terms of political development. Balfour used this understanding to restrict "Orientals'" invovlement in their own government's affairs while Campbell employed it to limit "Orientals'" political participation in the United States.

Campbell's efforts relied on Orientalism in other spheres beyond immigrants' fitness to citizenship. In the Fall of 1909, Campbell labeled at least three individuals – Matros Hagopian and Maderos Derderian of Fresno, California and Charlie Said Abraham of Michigan City, Indiana – as "Turks."[49] Newspaper articles and other primary sources describe Hagopian and Derderian as ethnic Armenians, while the 1910 census indicates that Abraham was part of Indiana's Syrian-Lebanese community.[50] It is unclear whether or not Campbell deliberately

[47] Speech to the House of Commons, Arthur James Balfour, June 1910, quoted in Said, *Orientalism*, 32-33.
[48] Ibid., 33.
[49] "Turks as Mongolians Barred from Citizenship," *Fresno Morning Republican*, September 21, 1909; "Why the Turk is not a White Man," *Fresno Morning Republican*, September 27, 1909; "When White is Not White," *The State*, October 20, 1909.
[50] "Turks as Mongolians Barred from Citizenship," *Fresno Morning Republican*, September 21, 1909; "Why the Turk is not a White Man," *Fresno Morning Republican*, September 27, 1909; 1910 U.S. Census, La Pourte, Indiana, population schedule, Michigan Township, Sheet No. B-7, dwelling 117, family 125, Charles Abraham, digital image, FamilySearch.org, accessed July 27, 2017, https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33S7-9RVW-92Y. In a letter responding to the article from October 20, 1909 in *The State*, the author referred exclusively to "Syrians,"

emphasized their nationality over their ethnicity, but either way, describing the three as "Turks" served his goals by further Orientalizing the three immigrants.

Edward Said writes that "Orientalism is a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between 'the Orient' and … 'the Occident.'"[51] The binary became so widely accepted that English and American thinkers could simply insert the term "Oriental" as a sweeping descriptor to make any aspect of an Asian people's life seem foreign, as if it were distinctively and inherantly a part of the East rather than the West. To paraphrase Said, authors developed idioms layered with essentialist doctrine, such as "Oriental despotism," "Oriental cruetly," "Oriental sensuality" and "Oriental religion."[52] As Said states, "for a writer to use the word *Oriental* was a reference for the reader sufficient to identify a specific body of information about the Orient."[53]

Following several Armenian massacres in the last decade of the 1800s and the first decades of the 1900s, newspapers across the United States published lurid stories describing Muslims in Anatolia killing Armenian men and forcing Armenian women to join harems. The Adana Massacre had taken place just six months prior to Campbell's efforts against Hagopian, Derderian, and Abraham; the situation in Turkey was both recent and gripping for many Americans.[54] In May of 1909, Montana's *Anaconda Standard* had emblazoned "Girls Sold for Horses by Turks" across its front page. "Women Victims of Turk Lust" read the headline on the front page of the Salt Lake City's *Evening Telegram*. The South Carolina newspaper *The State*

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further reinforcing the idea that Abraham was not ethnically Turkish. See A. H. Khoury, letter to the editor, *The State*, October 31, 1909.

[51] Said, Orientalism, 2.

[52] Said, Orientalism 4, 203. See, for example, Sir James George Frazer, *Adonis, Attis, Osiris: Studies in the History of Oriental Religion* (London: Macmillan and Co. Limited, 1906) or Louis Oliver Hartman, *Popular Aspects of Oriental Religions* (NY: The Abingdon Press, 1917).

[53] Said, Orientalism, 202.

[54] The Adana Massacre involved a series of attacks against Armenian Christians in the villayat of Adana following a failed coup against Abdul Hamid I.

detailed “reports of Muhammadan atrocities,” while the *Columbus Enquirer-Sun* asserted that Ottoman authorities “intend to permit the extermination of all Christians.”[55] It is not difficult to assume that by the autumn of 1909, if most Americans were to tie together Orientalist ideas with world events, they would associate concepts like “Oriental despotism” with the Turkish government, “Oriental cruelty” with the Armenian massacres, “Oriental sensuality” with harems and polygamy, and “Oriental religion” with Islam. Campbell’s decription of Hagopian, Derderian, and Abraham as “Turks,” regardless of his intent, further Orientalized the immigrants by associating them with Turkey and the atrocities that had occurred six months earlier in Anatolia. Given that Hagopian and Derderian were both Armenian, Campmbell’s comments were uninentionally ironic.

Writing to Frederick Jones, the U.S. deputy district attorney in Los Angeles, Campbell tried to engrain one last Orientalist trope into the case about Hagopian and Derderian – that Turks believed in polygamy and thus the two had run afoul of a provision in the 1906 Basic Naturalization Act that barred anarchists and polygamists from gaining U.S. citizenship.[56] In 1891 Congress initially barred polygamists from immigrating into the United States; according to Roger Daniels, legislators were concerned about Mormon converts from Europe rather than specific Muslim groups.[57] In the 1906 Basic Naturalization Act, legislators included a provision against the naturalization of anarchists, polygamists and “believer[s] in the practice of polygamy.”[58] Given the emphasis of the American press on Turkish harems after the Adana Massacre, Campbell’s statement that “Turks are believers in the practice of polygamy” would

[55] “Women are Victims [sic] of Turk Lust,” *Evening Telegram*, May 4, 1909; “Girls Sold for Horses by Turks,” *Anaconda Standard*, May 5, 1909; “Seeking News in Tarsus,” *The State*, May 5, 1909; “Sickening Story of Massacres,” *Columbus Enquirer-Sun*, May 5, 1909.
[56] “Turks as Mongolians Barred from Citizenship,” *Fresno Morning Republican*, September 21, 1909; “Why the Turk is not a White Man,” *Fresno Morning Republican*, September 27, 1909.
[57] Roger Daniels, *Not Like Us: Immigrants and Minorities in America, 1890-1924* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1997), 45,
[58] “An Act To establish a Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization and to provide for a uniform rule for the naturalization of aliens throughout the United States,” Public Law 358, 59th Cong., 1st sess. (June 29, 1906): 597.

have particularly resonated in 1909.[59] Campbell's letters to U.S. attorneys like Beatty, Balliet, and Jones illustrate how progressive political concerns and Orientalist ideas provided the foundation for his efforts to assign the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians to the "Yellow" races of the East rather than the "White" races of the West.

Consequences of Color

The stakes of Campbell's decision were high. Should the interpretation that the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians were "Yellow" and therefore ineligible to citizenship have become the operative legal paradigm, the potential effects would have reached into many different areas of the groups' lives. The first generation of immigrants would no longer have had the right to vote or run for Congress. The Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians who had fully naturalized prior to 1909 by meeting the residency requirement, taking out their first and second papers, and renouncing their allegiance to their former political leaders could still be stripped of their citizenship. This eventuality came to pass for several Indian-Americans in the 1920s when the US government revoked the citizenship of over sixty immigrants following the ruling in *United States v. Thind*, in which the Supreme Court concluded that individuals from India were not "White" persons.[60] For those who had spent so much time and effort and money to reach the United States, the emotional consequences of losing their status as citizens could be devastating. Vaisho Das Bagai was one of the Indian immigrants who saw his citizenship revoked after the Supreme Court's decision. The thirty-six year old father referenced the government's action in the note he wrote before killing himself.[61]

[59] Richard K. Campbell quoted in "Turks as Mongolians Barred from Citizenship," *Fresno Morning Republican*, September 21, 1909.
[60] *United States v. Thind*, 261 U.S. 204 (1923).
[61] López, *White by Law*, 91; Gualtieri, *Between Arab and White*, 75.

Under the Naturalization Division's definition, the immigrants would have faced a variety of social complications as well. In Mississippi, the Supreme Court ruled in the 1920s that school segregation laws against the "colored race" included Chinese individuals, thereby opening the door to the segregation of additional groups who were not legally "White."[62] Should a "Yellow" Syrian-Lebanese or Armenian individual have married a "White" person, they could have ran afoul of anti-miscegenation laws in several states that targeted "Mongolians" and "non-whites." Those convicted of violating anti-miscegenation laws typically found their marriages void and often faced fines or jail time.[63] Federal law eventually dictated that White American women who married "an alien ineligible to citizenship" would lose their citizenship.[64] As López points out, the phrase "aliens ineligible to citizenship" served as convenient way for legislators to circumvent "the Fourteenth Amendment's bar against invidious race-based discrimination."[65]

If affirmed by the other branches of the U.S. government, Campbell's decision had the potential to destroy the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians' livelihoods, especially as they expanded into more and more fields and occupations. Starting in the 1910s, Nebraska, Tennessee, and Washington forbade aliens from teaching in public schools.[66] Since 1895, Washington had also barred aliens from obtaining licenses to practice law.[67] Lawmakers in California had tried to prohibit non-citizens from owning land in their state since 1907; in 1913, Governor Johnson eventually signed a statute to that effect targeting aliens "ineligible to

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[62] López, *White by Law*, 52.
[63] Deenesh Sohoni, "Unsuitable Suitors: Anti-Miscegenation Laws, Naturalization Laws, and the Construction of Asian Identities," *Law & Society Review* 41, No. 3 (September 2007): 596-600. The possibility that immigrants from the Middle East could violate certain states' anti-miscegenation laws was raised in an unsigned letter from a Chief Naturalization Examiner. See the document dated May 21, 1924 in RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/43, National Archives, Washington D.C.
[64] López, *White by Law*, 128-129.
[65] Ibid., 128.
[66] Harry Rider, "Americanization," American Political Science Review 14, No. 1 (February 1920): 112.
[67] *re Yamashita*, 30 Wash. 234, 70 Pac. 482 (1902).

citizenship."[68] By the 1920s, Arizona, Louisiana, New Mexico, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Kansas had produced anti-alien land laws using a similar framework to California's legislation.[69] Given the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians' drive to run their own farms and businesses, any limitations on their ability to buy or lease land would have constituted a serious hindrance.

As news of the Naturalization Division's decision spread, a variety of Westerners – the district court's clerk in Custer County, Nebraska, a land agent from Scottsbluff, Nebraska, and a lawyer from Ashley, North Dakota – wrote to federal officials, asking how the order would affect homesteaders who had immigrated from the Ottoman Empire.[70] The land agent in Scottsbluff added that preventing the Syrian-Lebanese from taking up homesteads would constitute "an injustice" since "they are all good Americans" and "more patriotic than many of us native born."[71] According to Theodore Schmucker, a chief officer of the Naturalization Division in Denver, Colorado, if the judicial system affirmed the decision that the group was ineligible to citizenship, then the immigrants could keep their properties by commuting the homestead, but would have to pay the government "an outlay … from $1.25 and $2.50 per acre" of land.[72] Under the terms of the 1904 Kincaid Act, homesteaders in central and western Nebraska, where Custer County and Scottsbluff were located, received up to 640 acres.[73] Assuming Schmucker's understanding of the situation was accurate, then first generation Syrian-

[68] Franklin Hichborn, *Story of the California Legislature of 1911* (San Francisco: Press of The James H. Barry Company, 1911) 342; Franklin Hichborn, *Story of the California Legislature of 1913* (San Francisco: Press of The James H. Barry Company, 1913), 258, 260-274.
[69] Dudley O. McGovney, "The Anti-Japanese Land Laws of California and Ten Other States," *California Law Review* 35, No. 1 (March 1947): 7-8.
[70] George B. Mair to Theodore F. Schmucker, November 27, 1909, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/58, National Archives, Washington D.C.; G.L. Shumway to R.A. Ballinger, November 27, 1909, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/65, National Archives, Washington D.C.; G.M. Gannon to Fred Dennett, January 25, 1910, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/73, National Archives, Washington D.C.
[71] Shumway to Ballinger, November 27, 1909.
[72] Theodore F. Schmucker to George B. Mair, November 29, 1909, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/58, National Archives, Washington D.C.
[73] "An Act To amend the homestead laws as to certain unappropriated and unreserved lands in Nebraska," Public Law 233, 58th Cong., 2d sess. (April 28, 1904): 547.

Lebanese immigrants in those areas would have needed to pay between 800 and 1600 dollars in 1909 (over 20,000 dollars in today's terms) to keep the property that they had been improving for years, whereas the government would not have required "White" Nebraskan homesteaders to provide such an outlay.[74]

Meanwhile, over in Southern California, the implications of the Naturalization Division's directive came very close to preventing a Syrian-Lebanese police officer named George Shisham from being able to perform his job. Through the fall of 1909, Shisham had to litigate his Whiteness after a man he had arrested for disturbing the peace argued that under California law, "Shisham could not charge him with the crime because he was not, and could not become, an American citizen."[75] The Syrian-Lebanese ultimately won Shisham's case despite the best efforts of the deputy district attorney representing the U.S. government, who bluntly stated "America is for the Americans."[76] Overall, the legal, social, and professional consequences of being "non-white" would have been severe and serve as a reminder of the environment that people of color endured throughout the era.

H.A. Elkourie and Justin Kirreh

Given the potential implications of the Naturalization Division's actions, several incensed individuals among the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians worked throughout the fall and winter of 1909 to undermine Campbell. The two groups contacted their representatives in an effort to clarify the situation; over the span of three months five different Congressmen queried officials

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[74] Schmucker's policy interpretation, along with the variety of statutes targeting aliens, would primarily affect the first generation of Syrian-Lebanese and Armenian immigrants. Their children, if born in the United States, received birthright citizenship under the Fourteenth Amendment. However, should the group have been defined as "yellow" or "non-white" persons, second and third generation immigrants could still be subject to segregation and anti-miscegenation laws.

[75] Gualtieri, *Between Arab and White*, 58.

[76] "Hard Questions of Ethnology," *Los Angeles Times*, October 21, 1909.

from the Department of Commerce and Labor on the immigrants' behalf.[77] One Syrian-Lebanese individual from Birmingham, H.A. Elkourie, appears to have contacted Alabama's entire Congressional delegation seeking information.[78] As newspapers began to publish information about Campbell's decision, immigrant writers sent in letters to the editor trying to sway public opinion to their side.[79] J.E. Wehby attempted to persuade the Naturalization Division directly, referring to Syria as "the mother of modern sivilization [sic]" and the Syrian-Lebanese as the "earliest cultured people on the face of the earth."[80] In the waning days of October, election officials in the midwest turned away naturalized Syrian-Lebanese voters from the polls in Minnesota and Wisconsin. The group began to resist with even more urgency, holding mass meetings to protest their exclusion.[81]

Overall, the most effective activists were Elkourie and Justin Kirreh, two influential Syrian-Lebanese leaders whose advocacy caused the Naturalization Division to modify aspects of their policy. Elkourie, a doctor and the president of Birmingham's Syrian Young Men's Society, had previously taken the lead responding to slights from John L. Burnett, a member of the House of Representatives from Alabama, who criticized the Syrian-Lebanese alongside other "new" immigrant groups from Europe.[82] In 1907, Burnett had argued that the Syrian-Lebanese,

[77] Charles E. Fuller to Charles Nagel, November 11, 1909, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/42, National Archives, Washington D.C.; W.A. Rodenberg to Daniel J. Keefe, November 21, 1909, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/50, National Archives, Washington D.C.; William S. Greene to Daniel J. Keefe, November 30, 1909, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/55, National Archives, Washington D.C.; E.J. Hill to Richard K. Campbell, December 8, 1909, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/61, National Archives, Washington D.C.; Morris Sheppard to Daniel J. Keefe, January 14, 1909, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/70, National Archives, Washington D.C.

[78] Elkourie to Taft, November 4, 1909, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/43, National Archives, Washington D.C.

[79] H.E. Hallaby, letter to the editor, *New York Times*, October 15, 1909; A. Khoury, letter to the editor, *The State*, October 31, 1909.

[80] J.E. Wehby to Shiff, October 26, 1909, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/39, National Archives, Washington D.C.

[81] "Syrians will Enter Protest," *Grand Forks Daily Herald*, October 31, 1909.

[82] Gualtieri, *Between Arab and White*, 56.

along with Jews, Russians, and Poles, were distinctly different peoples than those of the "white race."[83]

Burnett's understanding of the immigrants' race seems less calculated compared to Campbell's views, in that the Congressman grouped the Syrian-Lebanese in with Poles and Russians, ethnic groups traditionally considered to be "Europeans." Like Simmon's placement of the group along side Poles, Hungarians, and Italians as "the scum and riffraff of Europe," Burnett's reference comes across as part of a general hostility towards recent immigrants. Campbell, on the other hand, made the more dangerous move from the immigrants' perspective. By dissociating Syrian-Lebanese and Armenian immigrants with those from Southern and Eastern Europe and instead grouping them with the Chinese and Japanese, he actively threatened their "Whiteness" and their eligibility to citizenship. The actions of the Naturalization Division constituted a far greater menace to the Syrian-Lebanese than did the invective of a congressman. As such, Elkourie escalated his tactics as well. After Burnett's speech in 1907, he wrote in to the *Birmingham Age-Herald*, whereas after Campbell's action in 1909, Elkourie corresponded directly with the Taft administration, contacting both the attorney general and the White House.[84] His letter drew the attention of Taft's secretary, Fred Carpenter, who immediately wrote to the Department of Commerce and Labor, asking for a report of Campbell's policies.[85]

As Elkourie wrote to various officials, Kirreh travelled from New York down to Washington D.C. in an effort to lobby members of the Executive Branch directly. On October 31, he met with the acting secretary and the assistant secretary of the State Department, who would soon pay even more attention to the issue after Rustem Bey, the Turkish Ambassador to

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[83] Burnett quoted in Gualtieri, *Between Arab and White*, 56.
[84] Elkourie to Wickersham, November 1, 1909, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/43, National Archives, Washington D.C.; Elkourie to Taft, November 4, 1909, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/43, National Archives, Washington D.C.
[85] Fred W. Carpenter to Charles Nagel, November 6, 1909, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/43, National Archives, Washington D.C.

the U.S., released a statement to the American press attacking Campbell's decision.[86] The following day Kirreh wrote to Charles Nagel, the Secretary of the Department of Commerce and Labor, asking for Campbell to be fired. Using quotes from Campbell's correspondence with Beatty and Balliet as evidence, Kirreh leveled several charges at the head of the Naturalization Division. He stated that Campbell had "created a racial bias against [his] race," revealed his "antagonism and personal malice" towards the Syrian-Lebanese, "coerced" judges and officials towards his point of view, and demonstrated an overall "lack of intelligence" about racial matters.[87] Kirreh also visited the Smithsonian, where he had experts from the institute's Division of Physical Anthropology confirm that it considered Syrians and Armenians as part of the White race.[88] Kirreh then sent out several public statements to the press, including his explanation as as to why the Syrian-Lebanese were "White" and his reasoning as to why Campbell was "a blockheaded, ignorant politician."[89] After Nagel failed to respond quickly to Kirreh's letter, the Syrian-Lebanese leader wrote to Taft directly on November 8, repeating his request that Campbell be removed from office.[90]

Elkourie and Kirreh's advocacy placed Nagel, as Campbell's supervisor in the Department of Commerce and Labor, in an uncomfortable position. His department was dealing with scrutiny from the White House, the State Department, and the press. Meanwhile Syrian-

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[86] "Are Syrians White?" *Sunday Oregonian*, October 31, 1909; "Thinks Law Unfair," *Washington Post*, November 2, 1909; "Free White Persons," *New York Times*, November 7, 1909.
[87] Justin S. Kirreh to Charles Nagel, November 1, 1909, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/43, National Archives, Washington D.C.
[88] "New Phase of the Color Line," *Baltimore American*, November 3, 1909; "Syrians Certainly of the White Race," *Columbus Enquirer Sun*, November 7, 1909.
[89] The documents Kirreh sent out to the press can be found in his November 8, 1909 letter to President Taft, and are hereafter cited as Public statements of Justin S. Kirreh in Kirreh to Taft, November 8, 1909, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/43, National Archives, Washington D.C.
[90] Kirreh to Taft, November 8, 1909, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/43, National Archives, Washington D.C.

Lebanese applicants were experiencing success defending their Whiteness in court.[91] Under pressure from several directions, the Commerce and Labor Department began trying to smooth the situation over as best it could. The morning of Friday, November 5, the acting secretary instructed Campbell to send a memo that "[n]o notice is to be taken of the fact that a petitioner, or declarant, is an Asiatic, until further directions are received."[92] The two Syrian-Lebanese advocates would never know it, but Campbell later credited Elkourie's correspondence with the White House and Kirreh's letters to Nagel as the "moving cause" of the change in policy.[93]

Approximately a week after the Naturalization Division sent out the new orders, Nagel asked a White House official to tell Elkourie that the Naturalization Division simply wanted to get the question of the immigrant's racial status clarified by the courts.[94] The secretary's measured reply to the White House did not contain any mention of the frustration Nagel had displayed a few days earlier, when he had admonished Campbell and stated that he had discussed the matter with president and they both wanted naturalization officials to focus on petitioners' individual characteristics rather than their countries of origin. Campbell said afterwards that "it was impressed upon me with plain and irresistible clearness that the Department prefered a cessation of the practice of raising the question in any way as to whether aliens applying for citizenship came within the provisions of section 2169."[95] Finally, Nagel wrote back to Kirreh on November 13, telling him that the administration was not firing

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[91] According to Kirreh, judges in New Orleans, St. Louis, and Stamford had ruled in favor of the Syrian-Lebanese in early November. Public statements of Justin S. Kirreh in Kirreh to Taft, November 8, 1909, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/43, National Archives, Washington D.C.

[92] Richard K. Campbell to Charles Nagel, November 11, 1909, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/43, National Archives, Washington D.C.; Memorandum, Raymond F. Crist, November 5, 1909, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/43, National Archives, Washington D.C.

[93] Report, Richard K. Campbell to William B. Wilson, March 22, 1913, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/43, National Archives, Washington D.C.

[94] Charles Nagel to Fred W. Carpenter, November 13, 1909, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/43, National Archives, Washington D.C.

[95] Report, Richard K. Campbell to William B. Wilson, March 22, 1913, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/43, National Archives, Washington D.C.

Campbell but that he had peronsally taken steps "looking to a discontinuance of any aggressive measures on his part."[96] Eventually, on December 3, 1909, the Naturalization Division further elaborated on their policy shift. Campbell sent out an additional memorandum that

> [c]lerks of courts exercising jurisdiction in naturalization proceedings will please disregard any request or direction heretofore made by any officer of this Division of the Department, whereby such clerks are called upon to refuse to receive or file declarations of intention and petitions for naturalization by reason of any meaning hitherto given by the Division of Naturalization to the words, white person and person of African nativity or decent, as used in section 2169, R.S.[97]

In short, clerks were to let Syrian-Lebanese and Armenian petitioners apply for citizenship, but it was up to individual judges as to whether the immigrants were "White" when they went before circuit or district courts to complete the naturalization process.

Between 1909 and 1915 eight reported cases took place in the federal courts involving a "Syrian" or Armenian petitioner's racial eligibility to citizenship: *In re Najour*, *In re Halladjian et. al.*, *In re Ellis*, *In re Mudarri*, *Ex parte Shahid*, *In re Dow*, *Ex Parte Dow*, and *Dow v. United States.* It is important to note that these do not represent the totality of cases before federal courts regarding the racial eligibility of Syrian-Lebanese and Armenian immigrants to citizenship, in that rulings regarding the groups were not always "reported."[98] As New York University's Law Library's guide on the subject states, "case law is published in official and unofficial case law reporters, in chronological order…. West is the major publisher of unofficial

[96] Charles Nagel to Justin S. Kirreh, November 13, 1909, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/43, National Archives, Washington D.C.

[97] Memorandum, Richard K. Campbell to Clerks of court exercising jurisdiction in naturalization proceedings, December 3, 1909, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/43, National Archives, Washington D.C.

[98] After the passage of the Basic Naturalization Act in 1906 and Campbell's subsequent intervention, numerous Syrian-Lebanese and Armenian individuals would have gone before circuit and district courts at the federal level to defend their eligibility, but only a portion of the judgments were recorded. For example, in his ruling for *In re Halladjian et al.* in December of 1909, Lowell mentioned that Federal courts had recently decided cases involving "Syrian" petitioners' racial eligibility in Rhode Island, Georgia, and Nebraska, though unfortunately the judge did not provide a citation for the cases or even list the applicants' names. Kirreh, as part of his letter to Taft, mentioned that judges in Stamford, New York City, St. Paul, New Orleans, and Saint Louis had ruled in favor of Syrian-Lebanese individuals between May and November of 1909. *In re Halladjian et al.*, 174 F. 834 (C.C.D. Mass. 1909); Public statements of Justin S. Kirreh in Kirreh to Taft, November 8, 1909, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/43, National Archives, Washington D.C.

case reporters…. Cases that are too recent, or that publishers do not feel are of significant importance may not be published in any of the reporters."[99] Thus, several racial prerequisite cases likely went unpublished. Of the eight reported cases between 1909 and 1915, the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians won five.

A New Commissioner

During the 1910s, the Naturalization Division underwent several organizational changes. From 1906 to 1913, the Naturalization Division was a part of the Bureau of Naturalization and Immigration. In 1913, Congress split the Naturalization Division from the Bureau of Naturalization and Immigration, creating two separate entities, the Bureau of Naturalization and a Bureau of Immigration. After the split, Campbell's new position became the "Commissioner of the Naturalization," while Crist, his assistant, became the Deputy Commissioner of Naturalization. During his time as Deputy Commissioner, Crist made the issue of assimilation a key priority, persuading Campbell to let him design a "citizen education" program under the auspices of the Naturalization Bureau.[100]

Rather than asking immigrants to memorize intricate facts about the U.S. government, the Naturalization Bureau's Americanization program focused on issues of health, education, patriotism, and morality. Starting in 1915, the bureau began working with naturalization examiners, organizations like the Boy Scouts, and various immigrant communities themselves in an effort to provide each entity with the knowledge and materials necessary to hold Americanization classes.[101] As one scholar who studied the Naturalization Bureau's efforts

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[99] LibGuides at NYU Law, "Case Law Research," http://nyulaw.libguides.com/content.php?pid=362576&sid=3065832 (accessed August 1, 2017).
[100] Susan M. Gordon, "Integrating Immigrants: Morality and Loyalty in US Naturalization Practice," *Citizenship Studies* 11, No. 4 (September 2007), 372.
[101] Ibid., 373, 376-377, 378.

notes, Crist's program "was drawn" from the segment of the progressives who "cloaked their arguments in the language of science, standardization, and efficiency, and saw their priories and their roles as experts as key to creating a well-ordered society."[102]

When Campbell retired in 1923, Crist assumed the commissioner's position.[103] Along with the change in commissioner came a shift in the Naturalization Bureau's internal view of the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians' Whiteness. Ever since Elkourie and Kirreh drew negative attention to Campbell in the waning months of 1909, the Naturalization Division had publically professed its neutrality as to the question of the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians' racial eligibility to citizenship. However, internal correspondence between the Labor and Justice Departments stated that "the view of the Bureau of Naturalization prior to 1923 was that Armenians were not eligible, while from 1923 the opposite view has prevailed."[104] Given Campbell's hostility to the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians and that 1923 was the year that Crist replaced him as Commissioner, it is likely the personnel change was the catalyst for the Bureau's internal shift.

1923 also served as a key year in the history of the racial prerequisite cases; on February 19, 1923, the U.S. Supreme Court had ruled in *United States v. Bhagat Singh Thind* that Indian immigrants were not White and were, therefore, ineligible to citizenship. The verdict followed a 1922 Supreme Court ruling in *Takao Ozawa v.United States*, which held that Japanese petitioners were racially ineligible to citizenship and hinted at the need to keep examining "borderline cases."[105] The two Supreme Court decisions gave any official who doubted the

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[102] Ibid., 374.
[103] U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, "Raymond F. Crist," https://www.uscis.gov/history-and-genealogy/our-history-27 (accessed August 10, 2017).
[104] Unknown to John G. Sargent, October 12, 1925, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/43, National Archives, Washington D.C.
[105] United States v. Thind, 261 U.S. 204 (1923); *Ozawa v. the United States*.

racial status of Syrian-Lebanese, Armenian, or Turkish immigrants cover to act against the groups.

In May of 1923, a prosperous Armenian rug merchant from Portland, Oregon named Tatos Cartozian was among those forced to navigate a hostile racial naturalization hearing. In the district court of Judge Robert S. Bean, the naturalization examiner, far exceeding the longstanding orders from the Naturalization Bureau dating back to 1909, singled out Cartozian and a Syrian-Lebanese man named Saleba Kaiel to come before Bean with their families in tow. The examiner, Vernor W. Tomlinson, wanted the appearance of two immigrants' wives and children to help the judge in determining Cartozian and Kaiel's racial status.[106] Bean ultimately denied Kaiel on the basis of his individual illiteracy, but granted Cartozian's citizenship, stating "if the government does not think that an Armenian comes under the meaning of the naturalization law, it can commence suit to cancel the [citizenship] paper."[107] Tomlinson quickly wrote to his superiors in the Naturalization Bureau expressing his personal opinion he could not "see where an Armenian, Syrian, Turk, Kurd, Arab or Bedouin, are any of them admissible to citizenship as white persons." Tomlinson added that he thought Judge Bean "was extremely doubtful of the right of an Armenian to be naturalized but that as the petitioner could have no appeal if the court determined adversely to him, he would therefore admit the petitioner so that the government could bring a cancellation suit from which either side could appeal."[108]

Receiving Tomlinson's report, Crist's deputy initially drafted a response on July 7, 1923, indicating that the Naturalization Bureau felt that Armenians and Turks should not be classed with Indian immigrants as racially ineligible to citizenship.[109] Crist decided not to send the draft

[106] Craver, "On the Boundary of White," 30, 36.
[107] Robert S. Bean quoted in Craver, "On the Boundary of White," 31.
[108] V.W. Tomlinson quoted in Craver, "On the Boundary of White," 37-38.
[109] Craver, "On the Boundary of White," 38.

out and instead reviewed the reported judicial decisions from 1909 and 1910.[110] After considering the question for a few weeks, Crist wrote to his boss, the Secretary of Labor, recommending they institute cancellation proceedings against Cartozian. He suggested making "test cases" of individual applicants with the ultimate view in mind of getting a final answer from the U.S. Supreme Court as to the racial eligibility of "Afghans, Syrians, Armenians, Turks, Kurds, Arabs, and Bedouins."[111] The assistant secretary in the Labor Department signed off on Crist's request, as did the Attorney General's office.[112]

The decision Crist faced was interesting. Armenian leaders later expressed their unhappiness with the Commissioner's decision to start a test case, preferring Lowell's verdict in Halladjian's case to be the last reported ruling on the matter.[113] Crist, on the other hand, felt other lower courts would embrace views like Tomlinson's and simply cite the Supreme Court's decisions against Ozawa or Thind to deny Armenian applicants citizenship. His understanding of the situation was later reinforced by events in Chicago, where a federal judge for the Northern District of Illinois used *United States v. Thind* to deny an Armenian, a Syrian-Lebanese, and a Persian applicant citizenship.[114] As Crist told one Armenian immigrant who wrote in to him, he had recommended a cancelation suit against Cartozian "because the law is uncertain and because more courts are dismissing the position for naturalization of an Armenian than before, and that it is only by this method that a final determination of the question can be reached." "It is for the

[110] Ibid.
[111] Raymond F. Crist to John J. Davis, August 2, 1923, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/43, National Archives, Washington D.C.
[112] Craver, *One the Boundary of White*, 38-39.
[113] M. Vartan Malcolm to James John Davis, November 28, 1923, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/43, National Archives, Washington D.C.
[114] Raymond F. Crist to Michael J. Quan, February 16, 1924, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/43, National Archives, Washington D.C.; Raymond F. Crist to Medill McCormick, April 2, 1924, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/43, National Archives, Washington D.C.

best interests of all concerned," he continued, "that this action be taken."[115] While Crist frequently expressed the hope that the group "may and will win," the immigrant community was acutely aware that the commissioner was gambling with the Armenians' future, not his own.[116]

Leon H. Tashjian and Hilda Aroos Asadian

News that the government was initiating cancellation proceedings against Cartozian spread quickly. Like Elkourie and Kirreh before them, several immigrants tried to influence the Naturalization Bureau directly, not realizing that Crist already had a favorable opinion of the group. In one memorable letter, Leon Tashjian, an ex-service member from Chicago, wrote to Crist after a court prevented one of his friends from taking out his second papers. Tashjian told the commissioner that he had taught his family "to love Old Glory" and to "stand by the colors of Red, White, and Blue." Showing his familiarity with U.S. history, Tashjian quoted watchwords from the American Revolution, implying that the Naturalization Department was ignoring the principles that "taxation without representation is tyranny" and "all men are created equal."[117] Given the hyper-nationalism during and after World War One, Tashjian's attempt to appeal to Crist's patriotism was not a bad strategy.

The individual, however, who had the best handle on Crist's biases was an Armenian teacher named Aroos Hilda Asadian. She had worked with Commissioner Crist in the past in her capacity teaching Americanization classes at the State Normal School in Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania.[118] Given her experience with Crist, much of her letter to the Naturalization

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[115] Raymond F. Crist to Leon Tashjian, January 4, 1924, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/43, National Archives, Washington D.C.
[116] M. Vartan Malcolm to Raymond F. Crist, January 8, 1924, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/43, National Archives, Washington D.C.
[117] Leon H. Tashjian to Raymond F. Crist, January 4, 1924, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/43, National Archives, Washington D.C.
[118] Aroos Hilda Asadian to Raymond F. Crist, February 25, 1925, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/43, National Archives, Washington D.C.

Commissioner focused on Armenians' capacity to assimilate into American society. She noted that, given the events taking place in Turkey during and after World War One, Armenian immigrants "hold American citizenship with great appreciation and loyalty" and "there is no danger of double allegiance." "They had suffered tremendously," Asadian continued, "for the preservation of ideals and principles so identical with those of this country." Concluding the letter, she added that a large number of her students had used the Americanization materials he had sent her in 1923 and asked Crist to mail her any new publications the Bureau had developed in the past year.[119]

Asadian's letter naturally emphasized the issue of assimilation, but she also used neatly numbered sentences to stress many of the same issues that individuals like Crist prioritized. The Armenians, she wrote, constituted the oldest Christian people in the world and eagerly sought out educational opportunities. She described them as "progressive, industrious, thrifty," and family-oriented. Given that some officials associated thrift with having low standards of living, she hastened to add her group were "good spenders for the necessities of life." Addressing the fears of people like Campbell that had drawn the Armenians and Syrian-Lebanese into the racial prerequisite cases in the first place, Asadian noted she personally opposed the "easy and quick methods of some states" to grant citizenship to those unworthy of it. She explicitly distanced her group from "[A]siatic races." Finally, in an effort to place her views on the right side of recent immigration policy – in this case the Quota Acts of 1921 and 1924 – Asadian claimed that Armenian immigrants would not try to "flood" the United States and that, "as a citizen of this country … I do not believe in unrestricted immigration." In short, Asadian's letter to Crist

[119] Ibid.

referenced as many of the ideological boundary lines of progressivism as possible to ensure the Commissioner of the Naturalization Bureau had a positive view of her group.[120]

Tentative Allies

It took some time for the Armenian community to realize that, even prior to their lobbying during the Cartozian case, Crist thought he was helping their group. Even after Crist met with Armenian leaders in Washington and reassured them several times that he felt the Armenians were White, the group never trusted him fully. Given Campbell's actions in 1909, the Armenians' were quite naturally suspicious of the Naturalization Commissioner. As Cartozian's situation became more widely known, several Armenian leaders, including G.H. Topakyan of the United Armenian Immigration Welfare Societies of America, Vahan Cardashian of the American Committee for the Independence of Armenia, and Arshag Mahdesian, the editor of the *New Armenia*, became more involved with the case.[121] The individual who interacted the most with Crist, however, was an Armenian lawyer from New York named M. Vartan Malcolm. A graduate of Harvard Law, Malcolm helped organize a "citizenship defense committee" for Cartozian and assumed the informal roles of the organization's "chief legal representative" and the group's liaison to Crist.[122] Distrustful of Crist and the Naturalization Bureau more broadly, Malcolm corresponded with the Commissioner throughout November and December of 1923 in an effort to ascertain the bureau's position.

Crist, for his part, repeatedly reassured representatives that he felt the Armenians were White and that the case "was friendly."[123] After corresponding with Malcolm, he sent out a

[120] Ibid.
[121] G.H. Topakyan to W.W. Husband, December 11, 1923, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/43, National Archives, Washington D.C.; Craver, "On the Boundary of White," 42-43.
[122] Craver, "On the Boundary of White," 40.
[123] Ibid.

reminder on December 16, 1923, telling the Bureau's naturalization examiners that the decision against Thind had no bearing upon the directive they had been operating under since 1909. Moreover, he informed them that the government had brought a cancellation suit against Cartozian, that more test cases were on their way "to test out the eligibility of Syrians, Persians, and perhaps other Asiatic races," and that examiners should "await the outcome of the final action in each of these test cases without attempting to thrash out the issue in each case that may arise involving members of these races."[124] Finally, Crist agreed to meet with Malcolm and offered to convene with Topakyan so that "means may be suggested that will prove of great advantage to the race you represent."[125]

On January 4, 1924, Malcolm met with Crist in Washington, D.C., where, according to the Armenian lawyer, they "cleared the atmosphere" and reached "a mutual understanding."[126] As Craver writes, the two established an uneasy "working relationship."[127] At the meeting, Crist revealed part of his agenda. Back in 1909 he had served as the assistant chief of the Naturalization Division and was well aware of the problems Elkourie and Kirreh's vocal protests had caused for Campbell. A letter Malcolm wrote to the commissioner a few days after their meeting indicates that Crist had a strong desire to cooperate quietly with the Armenian community. "We have no desire to make propaganda and everything has been done to discourage mass meetings and other public demonstrations," Malcom wrote. "I trust," he continued, "that you will do all in your power to assist our committee and me."[128] By January

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[124] Memorandum, Raymond F. Crist to Chief Naturalization Examiners, December 17, 1923, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/43, National Archives, Washington D.C.
[125] Raymond F. Crist to G.H. Topakyan, December 20, 1923, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/43, National Archives, Washington D.C.
[126] M. Vartan Malcolm to Raymond F. Crist, January 8, 1924, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/43, National Archives, Washington D.C.
[127] Craver, "On the Boundary of White," 40.
[128] M. Vartan Malcolm to Crist, January 8, 1824, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/43, National Archives, Washington D.C.

24, Crist was convinced that the Armenian representatives with whom he had spoken were in agreement with his course of action.[129]

Cartozian's case was to be heard by Judge Wolverton, Bean's colleague on the District Court of Oregon, in early May of 1924. Malcolm, as well as representatives for the American Committee for the Independence of Armenia, wanted Crist to abandon the suit against Cartozian and bring up a test case in Boston, Philadelphia, or New York City. They argued that trying the test case in the Northeast would save the groups a considerable amount of time and money, given that many of the organizations advocating for Armenian rights were based in the region.[130] Judge Wolverton, however, had previously ruled in favor of a Syrian-Lebanese and an Indian applicant as racially eligible to citizenship, placing the Armenians in a relatively favorable situation.[131] Whether or not the results of Wolverton's prior cases crossed Crist's mind is unknown, but he nonetheless refused to try a test case elsewhere with a different Armenian applicant.[132] On July 27, 1925, Wolverton delivered a lengthy ruling in favor of Cartozian's racial eligibility.

After Wolverton made his decision, both Crist and James Davis, the Secretary of Labor, pushed the Justice department to take the case to the Supreme Court.[133] Malcolm, confident that Wolverton's ruling was capable of withstanding the justices' scrutiny, was also fine with the case moving past the circuit court level and straight to the Supreme Court.[134] The goal of getting the question of the Armenians' racial eligibility before the highest court in the land failed, however. Davis, although he tried several times, could not convince the Justice Department to appeal the

[129] Ibid.
[130] Craver, "On the Boundary of White," 40.
[131] *In re Ellis*; *In re Bhagat Singh Thind*, 268 F. 683 (D.C.Or. 1920).
[132] Craver, "On the Boundary of White," 40.
[133] Craver argues that Davis' advocacy in favor of restrictive legislation against immigrants indicates he was wanted the case to move to the Supreme Court in the hopes that the justices would rule against the Armenians' eligibility to naturalize. Craver, "On the Boundary of White," 50.
[134] Ibid.

case to the Supreme Court.[135] The U.S. Attorney General was unable to see any problem with the ruling, while the Solicitor General stated "the opinion of Judge Wolverton in this case is convincing.[136] Wolverton's words constituted the last reported ruling for the Armenians in the racial prerequisite case.[137]

For the Syrian-Lebanese, *Dow vs. the United States* was the group's last reported prerequisite case. Documents from the Naturalization Bureau indicate that Crist intended to implement cancellation suits against several immigrant groups from Western Asia, and that the District Director of Naturalization in Chicago felt that the case of Kaleel Salem Sallah (one newspaper called him "Kalell Salem Sallak") could serve as the test case for the Syrian-Lebanese.[138] Judge James H. Wilkerson of the U.S. District Court for Northern Illinois had ruled that Sallah, along with Armenian and "Persian" individuals, were "Semites" and therefore racially eligible to citizenship.[139] The Naturalization Bureau prevented the District Director in Chicago from filing a cancellation suit against Sallah until "after the decision of the Supreme Court in similar cases."[140] Since Cartozian's case never made it to the Supreme Court and *Dow v. the United States* was the last reported racial prerequisite case for the Syrian-Lebanese, the Armenians' success seems to have benefitted both groups.

Progressivism was a wide-ranging, multi-faceted concept. The progressive movement encompassed an array of individuals who held similar concerns but were not monolithic when it came to their understanding of which tactics, points of emphasis, and priorities would best serve

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[135] Ibid.
[136] William D. Mitchell quoted in Craver, "On the Boundary of White," 50.
[137] Craver, "On the Boundary of White," 51.
[138] Crist to Davis, August 2, 1923; Newspaper clipping, "Chicago Armenian to be Naturalized," July 1, 1924, Publication Unknown, in Examiner Croft to District Director, July 12, 1924, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/43, National Archives, Washington D.C.; H.L. Roethe to Raymond Crist, July 21, 1924, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/43, National Archives, Washington D.C.
[139] Newspaper clipping, "Chicago Armenian to be Naturalized," July 1, 1924, Publication Unknown.
[140] Fred J. Schlotfeldt to Raymond Crist, November 26, 1924.

them. For the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians, different progressive tendencies – Campbell's skepticism towards the immigrants' political integrity and Crist's focus on groups' assimilative capacities – were at play getting them into the racial prerequisite cases of the 1910s and 1920s. Despite holding the same position in the same bureau, their individual biases caused the two officials to develop very different understandings of the immigrants' place in America. Campbell attempted to exclude them but failed. Despite a personally favorable position to these immigrant groups, Crist put them in a risky position. Neither the Syrian-Lebanese nor the Armenians were bystanders; instead, they sought to inform policy-making decisions about their legal status. In the end, they were successful in convincing policy-makers of their racial eligibility for citizenship.

CHAPTER 4

APPEALING TO BIASES: LAW AND CITIZENSHIP

A Unique Appeal

The stakes of the racial prequesite cases were high. While some of the Syrian-Lebanese worked to influence members of the executive branch directly, there were two more constituencies the immigrants tried to sway: the judges overseeing their case and, to the extent it was possible, the public. Among those who took up the Armenians' cause during the racial prerequisite cases was an individual named Chester Rowell, one of the founders of California's progressive movement.[1] By looking at Rowell's editorials on the Armenians' behalf and other contemporary advocates, it is possible to understand which arguments mattered most in adjudicating the issue of race in relation to the question of citizenship.

The Quintessential California Progressive

In 1907, two California newspaper editors, Chester H. Rowell and Edward Dickson, received seats in the state legislature's press row next to each other. Watching lobbyists for the Southern Pacific Railroad Company walk the floors of the legislature during House and Senate debates, the two commiserated and resolved to form a political entity to combat the influence of the company.[2] Once California's legislative session ended, Rowell and Dickson organized the League of Lincoln-Roosevelt Republican Clubs in an effort to create a progressive faction within the state's Republican Party.[3] The Lincoln-Roosevelt Republican League, in its initial meeting,

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[1] Kevin Starr, *Inventing the Dream: California through the Progressive Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 239-240.
[2] George E. Mowry, *The California Progressives* (NY: Quadrangle/The New York Times Book Company, 1976), 68-69, 73, 81;
[3] Ibid, 69.

embraced “proposals for the direct primary, the initiative, the referendum, and recall, the regulation of utility rates, conservation of forests, the outlawing of race-track gambling, a workmen’s compensation law, woman suffrage, a blue-sky law, and a minimum-wage law for women,” along with several measures to limit the power of the Southern Pacific Company.[4] By 1910, progressive reformers affiliated with the league had taken over California politics, winning the governorship and majorities in the both houses of the state legislature.[5]

The Lincoln-Roosevelt Republican League’s electoral success helped make Rowell one of the California progressives’ most influential power brokers. He served as chairman of the California Republican State convention in their takeover of state politics in the 1910 and was as an “intimate part” of the gubernatorial administration of Hiram Johnson, guiding the newly elected progressive Republican through the intricacies of governing.[6] Kevin Starr, an eminent scholar of history, described Rowell as “the true effective leader of California progressives.”[7] Rowell later served as Johnson’s campaign manager in his successful run for the U.S. Senate in 1917.[8] At the national level, he helped write the Progressive Party platform for Theodore Roosevelt’s presidential race in 1912, was a delegate at the Republican National Convention in 1912 and 1916, and made an unsuccessful run for the U.S. Senate as a Progressive in 1915.[9] Despite the time constraints of his political roles, Rowell continued to serve as editor of the *Fresno Republican* until 1920, when he eventually sold his paper.

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[4] Ibid., 69-70.
[5] Ibid., 129, 133-134.
[6] Chester H. Rowell to Hiram W. Johnson, November 25, 1914, Chester H. Rowell Papers, BANC MSS C-B 401, Box 2, Folder “1914, Nov.-Dec.,” The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley; Starr, *Inventing the Dream*, 254; Mowry, *The California Progressives*, 113.
[7] Starr, *Inventing the Dream*, 240.
[8] Spencer C. Olin, Jr. “Hiram Johnson, the California Progressives, and the Hughes Campaign of 1916,” Pacific Historical Review 31, No. 4 (November 1962): 405.
[9] James Herbert Kelley, ed., *The Alumni Record of the University of Illinois Including Historical Sketch and Annals of the University and Biographical Data Regarding Members of the Faculties and the Boards of Trustees* (Urbana: University of Illinois Urbana-Champaigne, 1913), 748; Spencer Olin, *California’s Prodigal Sons: Hiram Johnson and the Progressives* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), 100; Mowry, *The California Progressives*, 210-212, 240-241; Starr, *Inventing the Dream*, 271.

Rowell's growing influence was a product of the gritty, pain-staking efforts he and other progressives put forward in the early years of the Lincoln-Roosevelt League's existence. Between the formation of the league in 1907 and its electoral success in 1910, the Fresno newspaper editor was dealing with a variety of problems. For instance, Rowell became so vexed by the rivalries and personal ambitions amongst the reform movement in San Francisco that in 1908 he hired a local detective agency to create profiles of potential members of the League, including information on each individual's political leanings, religious affiliations, and business dealings.[10] By the Fall of 1909, Rowell was engaged on a wearying variety of fronts. The newspaper editor was watching warily as the new president, William Taft, grew enmeshed in a nation-wide controversy over forest conservation.[11] In California itself, the reformers were invested in mayoral elections in Los Angeles and San Francisco while Rowell was simultaneously working to organize a statewide meeting of the league in Oakland and searching for an acceptable progressive candidate to run for governor.[12] Amidst the flurry of activity involving presidential conflicts, municipal races, and political maneuverings, Rowell decided that the legal debate involving Armenian immigrants' "Whiteness" demanded his readers' attention. In September of 1909, the *Fresno Republican* published a spate of editorials, written by Rowell himself, defending the Armenian people as eligible for U.S. citizenship.[13]

[10] Mowry, *The California Progressives*, 78.
[11] The Ballinger-Pinchot controversy festered for years, leading to a Congressional investigation and furthering the rift between Taft and his predecessor, Roosevelt. See Mowry, *The California Progressives*, 84.
[12] Mark H. Stevens, "The Road to Reform: Los Angeles' Municipal Elections of 1909: Part I, *Southern California Quarterly* 86, No. 3 (Fall 2004): 232; Mowry, *The California Progressives*, 84, 85, 105-107.
[13] Chester H. Rowell, "Not 'Turks,'" *Fresno Morning Republican*, September 21, 1909; Chester H. Rowell, "Armenians,'" *Fresno Morning Republican*, September 22, 1909; Chester H. Rowell, "Are 'Europeans,'" *Fresno Morning Republican*, September 27, 1909.

Ideological Boundary Lines

On September 20, 1909, an Armenian immigrant from Fresno named Matros Hagopian went before Judge Austin's district court to take out his second papers.[14] With Hagopian were two witnesses to attest to his character, Bedros Hagopian and H.M. Rustigian. The *Republican* reported that Hagopian was not suspecting any difficulty, when Frederick Jones, the US deputy district attorney for Los Angeles, cut into the proceedings "like a thunderbolt out of a clear sky." He had received a message from Campbell the night of September 18 singling out Hagopian for exclusion. In the letter, Campbell claimed that Hagopian did not fall "within section 2169 of the Revised Statutes" and that he was also ineligible to citizenship under the Basic Naturalization Act because "Turks are believers in polygamy."[15] According to the *Republican*, however, Jones was forced to admit that Hagopian was an ethnic Armenian and neither a Turk nor a polygamist. Nevertheless, Jones supposed there had been a federal court decision that had affirmed Armenians were not of the White race. The attorney assumed Campbell was following a new precedent set by the courts, when in reality the Naturalization Division was engineering the situation in the hopes of pushing the matter to a federal court. In the end, Jones apologized to Hagopian but asked the judge to postpone naturalization proceedings for every Armenian applicant until he could secure more information about the racial eligibility question.[16]

Rowell quickly learned the details of the case, likely from Bedros Hagopian, who was one of the applicant's character witnesses and an editor at the Armenian-language press *Asbarez* (which had connections to the Rowell family).[17] On September 21, the *Fresno Republican*

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[14] "Turks as Mongolians are Barred from Citizenship," *Fresno Morning Republican*, September 21, 1909.
[15] Richard K. Campbell to Frederick Jones, quoted in "Turks as Mongolians are Barred from Citizenship," *Fresno Morning Republican*, September 21, 1909.
[16] "Turks as Mongolians are Barred from Citizenship," *Fresno Morning Republican*, September 21, 1909.
[17] "Turks as Mongolians are Barred from Citizenship," *Fresno Morning Republican*, September 21, 1909; A.K. Seklemian, "The Founding Years of the 'Asbarez' Newspaper" quoted in "How it All Began: A First Person Perspective from the Founders of Asbarez," *Asbarez*, August 14, 2008.

published details of Hagopian's situation along with an editorials from Rowell in defense of the Armenians' racial status.[18] Rowell followed through the next day with another favorable editorial towards Armenian immigrants.[19] Finally, Rowell somehow obtained copies of Campbell's correspondence with Beatty and Balliet, excerpts of which he published on September 27 along with a third editorial castigating the Head of the Naturalization Division.[20] Mirak writes in *Torn Between Two Lands* that Rowell's article on September 21 was the first to publicize the Naturalization Division's efforts against Armenians; if so, Campbell was unfortunate in that one of his initial Armenian targets had ties to an influential newspaperman and politician.[21] Rowell assumed that the Naturalization Division's intervention against "Turks" was simply a "blunder of Washington red tape," although he wrote "it [was] past all Fresno understanding of what can have got through the head of Richard K. Campbell."[22] The newspaper editor expressed his hope that the "transparently absurd" error would be fixed quickly, but decided to use the occasion to expound on his views of the Armenian people.[23]

The boundary lines of belonging could be drawn in several ways, depending on the biases and agenda of the mapmaker. For Campbell, the Armenians were of the westernmost part of the East, whereas Rowell tried to reposition the Armenians as the easternmost group in the West.[24] In the three September editorials, Rowell provided four key reasons as to why he felt the immigrants were racially eligible to citizenship. He emphasized the Armenians' capacity for assimilation, their cultural superiority in comparison to other groups, their religious and

[18] "Turks as Mongolians are Barred from Citizenship," *Fresno Morning Republican*, September 21, 1909; Chester H. Rowell, "Not 'Turks,'" *Fresno Morning Republican*, September 21, 1909.
[19]Chester H. Rowell, "Armenians,'" *Fresno Morning Republican*, September 22, 1909.
[20] "Why the Turk is Not a White Man," *Fresno Morning Republican*, September 27, 1909; Chester H. Rowell, "Are 'Europeans,'" *Fresno Morning Republican*, September 27, 1909.
[21] Mirak, *Torn Between Two Lands*, ftnt 46, 343.
[22] Rowell, "Not 'Turks,'" *Fresno Morning Republican*, September 21, 1909.
[23] Rowell, "Armenians,'" *Fresno Morning Republican*, September 22, 1909.
[24] Ibid.

civilizational heritage, and their longstanding ethnological categorizations. Rowell's reasoning incorporated progressive tenets and reflected his determination to undermine Orientalist tropes towards Armenians while reifying the same stereotypes about ethnic Turks.

In López's seminal work, *White By Law*, the author lists eight racial prerequisite cases for the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians.[25] All but one of the judges in López's prerequisite cases found the immigrants to be "White."[26] The first reported rulings establishing the judges' rationales about the immigrants' whiteness came out in December of 1909.[27] Rowell wrote his editorials in September of 1909, three months ahead of the first published rulings in December establishing the judges' rationales about the immigrants' whiteness. What is interesting is that the judges' reports echo several of the points made by the progressive Fresno editor. By examining Rowell's editorials in conjunction with the rulings in the racial prerequisite cases, one can see an attempt to inform public opinion and the law.

A Capacity for Assimilation

Progressive policy-makers stressed the idea of assimilation throughout the first two decades of the twentieth century. The focus on assimilation reached its peak amidst the heightened fears and animosities engendered by World War One, as many local, state, and federal officials espoused "one hundred percent Americanism" and attacked "hyphenated groups" such as German-Americans and Irish-Americans.[28] Reformers' understanding of

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[25] *In re Najour*, 174 F. 735 (N.D. Ga. 1909); *In re Halladjian et al.*, 174 F. 834 (C.C.D. Mass. 1909); *In re Ellis*, 179 F. 1002 (D. Or. 1910); *Ex parte Shahid*, 205 F. 812 (E.D.S.C. 1914); *Ex parte Dow*, 211 F. 486 (E.D.S.C. 1914); *In re Dow*, 213 F. 355 (E.D.S.C. 1914); *Dow v. United States* 226 F. 145 (4th Cir. 1915); *United States v. Cartozian*, 6 F. 2d 919 (D. Or. 1925). In the case *In re Mudarri*, 176 F. 465 (C.C.D. Mass. 1910), the petitioner is best described as "Syrian" rather than as "Syrian-Lebanese" due to his birth in Damascus.
[26] The exception is Judge Henry Smith, who ruled against the Syrian-Lebanese in *Ex parte Shahid*, 205 F. 812 (E.D.S.C. 1914); *Ex parte Dow*, 211 F. 486 (E.D.S.C. 1914); *In re Dow*, 213 F. 355 (E.D.S.C. 1914).
[27] *In re Najour*, 174 F. 735 (N.D. Ga. 1909); *In re Halladjian et al.*, 174 F. 834 (C.C.D. Mass. 1909).
[28] Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, 204-209.

assimilation encompassed a variety of facets, including immigrants' religion, familiarity with America's languages and customs, occupational advancement, and demonstrations of patriotism.

Syrian-Lebanese and Armenian immigrants were in a relatively unique position to demonstrate their assimilative potential. As Naff and other historians have argued, long-distance pack peddling served the Syrian-Lebanese in many ways, acclimating many of the immigrants to the nuances of the English language and American etiquette. Peddling proved profitable enough that many of the immigrants could fight their way up to the middle class, opening up small businesses that further tied the group to American communities. Meanwhile, tens of thousands of Armenian immigrants had fled the Ottoman Empire in-between massacres; some individuals hoped to return to Turkey at a distant date while many others were grateful to have escaped permanently to the United States. As the U.S. Immigration Commission noted, the Armenians were among the groups least likely to return to the country in which they were born.[29] Thus, a large portion of the immigrant community was looking to engage in America's life and culture for the foreseeable future. The Armenians actively sought out public education and were purchasing property in an effort to run their own farms and businesses. Finally, given that the majority of the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians were Christians, their religious heritage provided them with a possible conduit to building relationships with certain American denominations.

Rowell's time in Fresno allowed him to witness the Armenian immigrants' advancement first-hand. During the late 1890s, he taught German and mathematics at Fresno Central High,

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[29] United States Immigration Commission, "Abstracts of Reports of the Immigration Commission with Conclusions and Recommendations and Views of the Minority, Volume One," 181.

the city's main school.[30] He and his sister, Cora Rowell, were two of the five teachers at Fresno Central High School; it is highly likely that between the two of them they would have taught several Armenian students.[31] Records from 1914 show that over ten percent of the graduates from Fresno High School that year were Armenian.[32] By the early 1920s, a score of Armenian students – many with marks for "unusual high scholarship" – were graduating each year, with Reverend G.M. Papazian giving the invocation for Fresno High School's commencement exercises in 1922.[33] That same year, Armenian and native-born students performed scenes together from *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Taming of the Shrew*, *Merchant of Venice,* and *Julius Caesar* at Fresno County's Shakespeare Pageant.[34] When Rowell's uncle, Dr. Chester A. Rowell, died in 1912, the Fresno Armenians held a memorial service for him, where speakers quoted poetry and pianists and violinists played music written by classical European composers like Chopin, Schumann, and Beriot.[35]

Rowell eventually left teaching to take over the editorship of the *Fresno Republican* from his uncle. He spent a lot of his time at the *Republican* in close proximity to the Armenian community. The publishing headquarters of the paper were located in the "Rowell Building" –

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[30] Chester H. Rowell, "A Brief Account of the Life of Chester H. Rowell," Unpublished Autobiography, 1932, Chester H. Rowell Papers, BANC MSS C-B 401, Carton 3, Autobiography Folder, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 10.
[31] Miles Chapman Everett, "Chester H. Rowell, Progressive Humanist and California Progressive," (PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1966), 116.
[32] Program, Fresno High School Commencement Exercises, June 11, 1914, Scrapbooks of Theater and Concert Programs (Mostly of Fresno, Calif. And Pomona College) Collected by Miss Anne Avakian, BANC pf F89.F88 S3, Box "V. 1-7, 9," Folder "V. 1," The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.
[33] Program, Fresno High School Commencement Exercises, June 9, 1922, Scrapbooks of Theater and Concert Programs (Mostly of Fresno, Calif. And Pomona College) Collected by Miss Anne Avakian, BANC pf F89.F88 S3, Box "V. 1-7, 9," Folder "V. 1," The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley; Program, Fresno High School Commencement Exercises, June 15, 1923, Scrapbooks of Theater and Concert Programs (Mostly of Fresno, Calif. And Pomona College) Collected by Miss Anne Avakian, BANC pf F89.F88 S3, Box "V. 1-7, 9," Folder "V. 1," The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.
[34] Program, Shakespeare Pageant, April 21, 1922, Scrapbooks of Theater and Concert Programs (Mostly of Fresno, Calif. And Pomona College) Collected by Miss Anne Avakian, BANC pf F89.F88 S3, Box "V. 1-7, 9," Folder "V. 1," The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.
[35] "Members of Armenian Colony Hold Memorial for Dr. Rowell," *Fresno Morning Republican*, June 3, 1912.

named after Dr. Rowell – at the intersection of Van Ness and Tulare streets.[36] The Rowell Building housed the offices of the Armenian General Benevolent Union and was a block away from the northwestern boundary of the Armenian section of Fresno known as "Armenia Town."[37] The Rowell Building was a short walk away from Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church, First Armenian Presbyterian Church, Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church, several Armenian businesses, and the Emerson Grammar school that William Saroyan and many other Armenian children attended.[38]

The Armenian section of Fresno served as an important hub for ranchers like Tatiros Mooradian, who was arguably one of the most patriotic individuals in the state of California. Born in the Ottoman Empire in the 1850s, he had the American flag tattooed on his arm in 1888, sent three of his sons off to join the U.S. army, and asked to fight in both World Wars, but was told each time he was too old.[39] Many Armenian individuals chose to emphasize their patriotism both publicly and privately. One house combined etchings of George Washington, a lithography of the Grand Canyon, and a framed version of the Declaration of Independence near more familiar decorations like a picture of Khrimian Hayrig, the chief bishop of the Armenian Apostolic Church.[40] At the San Francisco's Panama-Pacific Exposition, of which Rowell was a board member, the Armenians' float, like the tattooed Mooradian, proudly displayed the American flag.[41] While the Armenians were not monolithic in their understanding of the United

[36] "Fresno Republican Printery (1919)," *HistoricFresno.org*, http://historicfresno.org/nrhp/republic.htm (accessed June 8, 2017); Bonhia Lee, "Exterior Renovations Begin on Downtown Fresno's Rowell Building," *Fresno Bee*, February 10, 2017.
[37] Berge Bulbulian quoted in R. Baloian, "Two Events," *Armenian Genocide Commemorative Committee, Fresno*, http://agcfresno.org/history-2/two-events/ (accessed June 8, 2017).
[38] Mirak, *Torn Between Two Lands*, 273.
[39] "Tatiros Mooradian Dies at 107," *Fresno Bee*, December 1, 1962.
[40] David Ollan quoted in Mirak, *Torn Between Two Lands*, 285.
[41] Booklet, Edward Minasian, *The Armenian Community of California: The First One Hundred Years* (Los Angeles: The Armenian Assembly Resource Center, 1982), 1 in BANC pf F870A7m5, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

States, the efforts of many of the immigrants to become a part of American life were visible to any contemporary in Fresno who cared enough to look.[42]

Rowell's favorable interactions with the group in Fresno undergirded his September editorials, in which he endorsed Hagopian and other Armenian individuals' ability to integrate into the community. On September 21, he emphasized that Hagopian "came here to be a good citizen, and will be one, if we will let him," and added in an editorial the next day that the Armenians as a whole "have intelligence and energy and … are acquiring wealth."[43] Bluntly contradicting Campbell, Rowell stated that the group did "not need to be 'civilized' nor 'enlightened' nor trained up to become efficient members of society," and that the Armenians' assimilative process required nothing but "time and mutual understanding."[44] It is worth noting that, in his individual interactions with the Armenian immigrant community, the editor emphasized the concept of acculturation rather than assimilation. Rather than asking the group to give up their language and heritage, he and his uncle helped the community start an Armenian language newspaper.[45] In 1915 during the middle of a primary race for the U.S. Senate, Rowell took time off to speak at an event celebrating the Armenian language, never mentioning the campaign.[46] In Rowell's writings, the author carefully argued that the Armenians had the *capacity* to assimilate, without ever demanding that they immediately or totally do so.

Rowell was not alone in focusing on the issue of assimilation in relation to the question of immigrants' Whiteness. In the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians' racial prerequisite cases, two judges, Francis Lowell and John Wolverton, emphasized the issue. In the 1909 case *In re*

[42] Mirak, *Torn Between Two Lands*, 250.
[43] Rowell, "Not 'Turks,'" *Fresno Morning Republican*, September 21, 1909; Rowell, "Armenians," *Fresno Morning Republican*, September 22, 1909.
[44] Rowell, "Armenians," *Fresno Morning Republican*, September 22, 1909.
[45] Seklemian, "The Founding Years of the 'Asbarez' Newspaper" quoted in "How it All Began: A First Person Perspective from the Founders of Asbarez," *Asbarez*, August 14, 2008.
[46] "Rowell Increasing Strength, *Sausalito News*," May 16, 1914.

Halladjian et al., the assistant U.S. attorney, James Farrell, contested four Armenians' eligibility to naturalize by submitting a brief containing several of Campbell's letters. According to Campbell, the term White or European served as "a brief and convenient designation descriptive of the prevailing ideals, standards, and aspirations of the people of Europe."[47] Lowell, a former mugwump appointed by Roosevelt, rebutted Campbell's implication that the Armenian petitioners did not hold to the same "ideals, standards, and aspirations" by arguing that the group could "become Westernized" and were "readily adaptable to European standards." [48] To support his interpretation as to why the Armenians could and would assimilate, Lowell cited the Armenians' business dealings, their willingness to attend American schools like Roberts College in Turkey, and their desire to immigrate to Great Britain and the United States.[49]

1n 1910, Judge Wolverton also focused on the issue of assimilability in the case of Tom Ellis, a Maronite who had immigrated from Beirut. Wolverton, a Roosevelt appointee, felt that Ellis had integrated into American life as "a good and highly-respected citizen on the community in which he lives." The judge listed several of Ellis' traits that he found appealing, stating "the applicant is of good morals, sober and industrious, speaks and writes the English language, has a fair understanding of our institutions and form of government, and is well disposed toward the government." In Wolverton's eyes, Ellis possessed "without question, all the essential qualifications to entitle him to naturalization."[50]

In 1925, the same judge assessed Tatos Cartozian's eligibility to citizenship. While a decade and a half had passed since he had appraised Ellis, Wolverton remained as dedicated as

[47] Richard K. Campbell quoted in "Turks as Mongolians Barred from Citizenship," *Fresno Morning Republican*, September 21, 1909.
[48] A. Lawrence Lowell, "Francis Cabot Lowell, (1855-1911)," *Proceedings of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* 51, No. 14 (December 1916): 903.
[49] *In re Halladjian et al.*, 174 F. 834 (C.C.D. Mass. 1909).
[50] *In re Ellis*, 179 F. 1002 (D. Or. 1910).

ever to the concept of assimilability. In *United States v. Cartozian*, he ruled that "it may be confidently affirmed that the Armenians are white persons, and moreover that they readily amalgamate with the European and white races."[51] Further affirming the importance of assimilation to Wolverton's worldview, the judge referenced several scholars and local community leaders who had argued that Armenians could "assimilate" or "amalgamate" with "White" persons.[52] Given the frequency with which Cartozian's witnesses brought up assimilability, the Armenian community and their allies knew it would be important to accentuate the issue.

Orientalizing Others

Neither in his September editorials nor later in his career did Rowell fully challenge the binaries underlying Orientalist discourses. Before Campbell's actions, Rowell had argued that the Occident stretched from California in the west to Greece in the east.[53] His desire to defend the Armenians' racial eligibility caused him to shift his boundary lines, positioning the group as the "very easternmost outpost of our race and civilization" who had "come to join [California] in keeping the westernmost border."[54] Overall, however, he continued to use Orientalist binaries against the Turks, Chinese, Japanese, and Indians. Rowell would have lost a large portion of his audience had he seriously tried to upend the traditional East-West dichotomies. When Rowell positioned Armenian immigrants in the Occident or a judge deemed a Syrian-Lebanese petitioner to be of the White race, they only helped a single group. Rowell and the courts ultimately left Chinese, Indian, and Japanese individuals outside the boundaries of Whiteness. They could

[51] *United States v. Cartozian*, 6 F. 2d 919 (D. Or. 1925).
[52] Paul Rohrbach, Roland Burrage Dixon, James Barton, and Mrs. Otis Floyd Lamson quoted in *United States v. Cartozian*, 6 F. 2d 919 (D. Or. 1925).
[53] Chester Rowell, "Orientophobia," *Collier's*, February 6, 1909, 29.
[54] Rowell, "Armenians,'" *Fresno Morning Republican*, September 22, 1909.

move some groups from Western Asia into the Occidental category because they kept the peoples of Central and East Asia classed as Orientals, tinkering at the margins at the map without abandoning the basic and long-standing precepts of Orientalism. In his writings, Rowell further cemented the idea of a fundamental dichotomy between East and West by contrasting the qualities of Turks and the Japanese to those of the Armenians.

On September 21, 1909, rankled by Campbell's description of Hagopian as a Turk, Rowell used the group as foils to emphasize the Armenians' Whiteness so they would not be "ranked with Turks and Chinese."[55] "Turks," he asserted, "are Mongolians and Polygamists and anything else you might like to call them," whereas "Armenians are Christians and Aryans – men of our own race and religion."[56] On September 27, after Campbell used the same designation against a second Armenian applicant, Rowell repeated his formulation: Turks were "by origins and civilization, un-European," while Armenians were "by origin, civilization, and institutions, at one with Europeans."[57] In the racial prerequisite case *United States v. Cartozian*, Judge Wolverton also intentionally distanced the Armenians from other groups in Anatolia, noting they had "always held themselves aloof from the Turks, the Kurds, and allied peoples."[58]

Rowell's strong defense of Armenians' assimilative capacity stands in contrast to his stance toward the "flood from the Orient" coming from eastern and central Asia.[59] Presaging the Supreme Court's disparagement of Indian immigrants' assimilative capacities in *United States v. Thind*, Rowell argued that "the Hindu is worthless…. Nobody understands him and he

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[55] Rowell, "Not 'Turks,'" *Fresno Morning Republican*, September 21, 1909.
[56] Ibid.
[57] Rowell, "Are 'Europeans,'" *Fresno Morning Republican*, September 27, 1909.
[58] United States v. Cartozian, 6 F. 2d 919 (D. Or. 1925).
[59] Draft, Chester H. Rowell, "Article published in Colliers Weekly in 1908 or early 1909," Undated, Chester H. Rowell Papers, BANC MSS C-B 401, Carton 3, Folder 3, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 2.

understands nobody."[60] Chinese individuals were less of a priority for him given the barriers the United States had put up in 1882. The Japanese, however, suffered several negative editorials in the *Fresno Republican* written by Rowell himself.[61]

The editors' animus towards the Japanese stemmed from several sources. The first involved Rowell's crusade against California's large corporations and his fear that Japanese were willing to endure subpar working conditions. In 1910, John Mackenzie, the "ex-boss of San Jose" and the current state commissioner of labor statistics, issued a lengthy report on California's agricultural industry. According to the *San Francisco Call*, Mackenzie's report described Japanese laborers as necessary for the survival of California's agribusinesses due to the groups' mobility and submissiveness towards employers.[62] Rowell alleged Mackenzie wanted "servile laborers – men who will work cheaply, live still more cheaply, put up with any sort of treatment and accommodations, who will entail no responsibility on the employer and who have permanently no ambition to rise above this servile class."[63] According to Rowell, Mackenzie preferred Chinese workers, followed second by the Japanese.[64] The editor was particularly incensed because he felt the spirit of the report ran counter to the efforts to many of California reformers' legislative priorities, which, in the early 1910s, included workmen's compensation measures, a minimum wage law, a bill to ensure laborers were regularly paid, and

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[60] Ibid., 3.
[61] See for instance, Chester H. Rowell, "Two Views of Japan" *Fresno Morning Republican*, April 28, 1905; Chester H. Rowell, "Kuroki Mistkane," *Fresno Morning Republican*, April 20, 1907; Chester H. Rowell, "White and Yellow," *Fresno Morning Republican*, September 13, 1907; Chester H. Rowell, "On Same Footing," *Fresno Morning Republican*, January 4, 1910; Chester H. Rowell, "A Calamity," *Fresno Morning Republican*, May 30, 1910; Chester H. Rowell, "While it is Small," *Fresno Morning Republican*, May 6, 1913.
[62] "Ranchers Need Japanese, Says J.D. Mackenzie," *San Francisco Call*, May 30, 1910
[63] Rowell, "A Calamity," *Fresno Morning Republican*, May 30, 1910.
[64] Ibid.

regulations regarding child labor and maximum work hours.[65] The report strengthened Rowell's aversion to Chinese and Japanese immigrants, for in his eyes, not only were the two groups the preferred tools of California's corporations, but they were helping to perpetuate the antithesis of reformers' ideal workplace.

Rowell's second concern about the Japanese centered around his fear that the group was fundamentally and inviolably different from native-born Americans. "Japan is wholly Oriental," he wrote, "and California must be wholly Occidental."[66] He argued that even though the Japanese possessed many admirable qualities, the inevitable clash of the Occident meeting the Orient would create decades, if not centuries, of racial discord in the West.[67] As evidence for his claims, he pointed to the disappearance of California's "White" small farmers, who he claimed had sold their land as soon as Japanese workers and landowners moved nearby.[68] The same thing, Rowell stated, was happening with Armenian immigrants, "but their problem is temporary, since the Armenians are white and assimilable and make good citizens" – thereby implying the Japanese were inassimilable, non-white, and unfit for citizenship.[69]

Rowell interpreted the racial discord involving African Americans in the South as a warning of what would happen if immigrants from Japan continued to enter the United States in large numbers. He stated that

> South Carolina's problem was insignificant once. The Chicago fire was once a spark. Every such problem has its small beginning…. What would South Carolina now give if it could turn back the wheels of history…. If we deal with this race question now, our descendants will have no race questions to deal with. If Californians do not deal with it

[65] Franklin Hichborn, *Story of the Session of the California Legislature of 1911* (San Francisco: The James H. Barry Company, 1911), 232, 234, 236-245, 246-260; Franklin Hichborn, *Story of the Session of the California Legislature of 1913* (San Francisco: The James H. Barry Company, 1913), 346-348, 350-352.
[66] Rowell, "Two Views of Japan" *Fresno Morning Republican*, April 28, 1905.
[67] Rowell, "On Same Footing," *Fresno Morning Republican*, January 4, 1910; Rowell, "While it is Small," *Fresno Morning Republican*, May 6, 1913.
[68] Rowell, "Orientophobia," *Collier's*, February 6, 1909, 13.
[69] Draft, Rowell, "Article published in Colliers Weekly in 1908 or early 1909," 4.

> now, they, like South Carolinians, will leave a race question which their descendants will have to deal with, and against which they will be helpless.[70]

Given that Rowell saw a similarity between the West's "racial problem" and that of the South, perhaps it is not surprising that he prescribed two solutions with which Southern progressives would be very familiar – preventing integration and miscegenation. Rowell argued that the two races ought to agree to treat each other "as equal -- but separate," embracing the essentials of *Plessy v. Ferguson*, but with nations instead of coach cars.[71] He claimed California had "no objection" towards the Japanese, as long as they and their civilization remained "in the Orient."[72] As he later put it, "What comes in through the San Francisco mouth no American generation can ever digest or eject. It may be Asia's meat, but it is our poison."[73] While Rowell was not willing to call for the complete exclusion of the Japanese, he hoped Japan would see the necessity of keeping its people separate from the West on its own accord.[74]

Like many Californians, Rowell subscribed to the idea that his state served as the western-gate keeper of America.[75] This idea, combined with the editor's view of Japanese as incontrovertibly different from White folks and a potential "race problem" in the making, led Rowell to oppose "mongrelization" and "amalgamation." [76] When different races intermarried, the blood of "Non-white" races, in Rowell's mind, overwhelmed that of Whites. "If you mix Greek and Turk," he claimed, "the product is a Turk."[77] The idea of a future bi-racial generation was just as threatening to the Fresno editor as was the idea of increased Japanese immigration

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[70] Rowell, "While it is Small," *Fresno Morning Republican*, May 6, 1913.
[71] Rowell, "White and Yellow," *Fresno Morning Republican*, September 13, 1907.
[72] Rowell, "Kuroki Mistkane," *Fresno Morning Republican*, April 20, 1907.
[73] Draft, Rowell, "Article published in Colliers Weekly in 1908 or early 1909," 1.
[74] Rowell, "Orientophobia," *Collier's*, February 6, 1909, 29; Rowell, "White and Yellow," *Fresno Morning Republican*, September 13, 1907.
[75] Erika Lee, *At America's Gates: Chinese Immigration During the Exclusion Era, 1882-1943* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 10-11.
[76] Rowell, "Orientophobia," *Collier's*, February 6, 1909, 13.
[77] Draft, Rowell, "Article published in Colliers Weekly in 1908 or early 1909," 5.

because he felt the end-result of both would be the same. Rowell claimed to *Collier's* that it was necessary to limit both integration and miscegenation if his state was to accommodate "the cry of the unborn generations of the West for the right to be born of Occidental blood and under American institutions."[78]

Eight months after publishing his xenophobic screed for *Collier's*, he was defending Armenians in the *Fresno Republican* with the same fervency with which he had disparaged groups from East Asia. The binaries in Rowell's writings between Turks and Armenians, the "Yellow" race and the "White race," the East and the West, and the Orient and the Occident were important to establishing the Armenians' racial credentials. As Richard T. Ford noted in *Urban Space and the Color Line*, "in order for a white race to exist, there must be a black race which is everything the white race is not (read of course: does not want to be associated with)."[79] In the Armenians' case, the danger was not that policy-makers would see them as African, but as Asians. By differentiating the Armenians from immigrants typically associated with being "Eastern" or "Oriental" or "Yellow" Rowell left the basic structure of Orientalism intact while distancing the group from the disadvantageous legal categorization as "Asiatics."

Several years later, the legal system eventually affirmed Rowell's understanding that Armenians were "White" while Indian and Japanese immigrants were not. In 1925, Judge Wolverton ruled the Armenians met the racial prerequisite for citizenship in *United States v. Cartozian*, which served as the group's last reported case on the issue. A few years earlier, the Supreme Court had found Indian and Japanese individuals to be Non-White and therefore ineligible to naturalize.[80] The Syrian-Lebanese won their last reported case in 1915. Progressive-era courts placed the two largest immigrant groups from Western Asia within the

[78] Rowell, "Orientophobia," *Collier's*, February 6, 1909, 13.
[79] Richard T. Ford, quoted in Ian F. Haney López, *White by Law*, 28-29.
[80] *Ozawa v. United States*, 260 U.S. 178 (1922); *United States v. Thind*, 261 U.S. 204 (1923).

borders of Whiteness, but by categorizing Indian and Japanese immigrants as Non-White they continued to hold onto the familiar dichotomy between Orient and Occident.

Civilizational Heritage

Since Wiebe's *Search for Order*, historians have traditionally seen progressives as well-educated, urban, middle-class professionals. Many progressives were fascinated with examining groups' moral and intellectual development – some, like eugenicists, were obsessed with the idea to a dangerous extent. When progressive nativists wanted to malign an entire immigrant group's moral and mental character, one technique they used was to denigrate the historical heritage of that people. For example, in *The Old World in the New*, Edward Ross disparaged Slavic immigrants by attacking both their past and their present. "The melancholy Slavic world," he wrote, lies "in the dim east of Europe, far from the vertical beams of civilization."[81] To emphasize the group's supposed lack of development, he claimed that, in the Middle Ages, "Slavland lay still in heathen darkness," immolating widows and using the heads of Christians for human sacrifices.[82] Ross argues that "the bulk of the Slavs" in the twentieth century still resided on a "lower plane of culture," and insulted them as ignorant, illiterate, superstitious, subservient, coarse, and three hundred years behind the English in their development.[83]

Rowell took the opposite track with the Armenians. Looking to bolster the group's claim to Whiteness, the progressive editor praised the immigrants' history and highlighted their ties to Christianity. "In education and culture," Rowell wrote, "Armenian scholars were composing treatises on philosophy when our Northern ancestors were crouching in caves, gnawing the meat from the bones of slain beasts." He also noted that their civilization predated the Greeks, that the

[81] Edward A. Ross, *The Old World in the New: The Significance of Past and Present Immigration to the American People* (NY: The Century Co., 1914), 120.
[82] Ibid., 120, 123.
[83] Ibid., 123-124.

Armenians were allies with the crusaders, and connected the Armenians' language to those of the "Aryan group."[84] Knowing his audience, he also tied the history of the Armenian people to well-known figures from the Bible. Whereas Ross stressed the "heathen darkness" of the Slavs, Rowell stated that

> the Armenians are the only Christians who have been Christian continually from the very time of Christ. The legendary church of Armenia attributes its origin to a message sent by Jesus himself, and the national church, as a historic institution, dates from St. Gregory the Illuminator, a prince of the reigning house of Armenia, who established the Patriarchate in the year 302.[85]

The other religious connection Rowell made came from the Old Testament. The Armenian monarch overthrown by Alexander the Great, he wrote, was the "great grandson of Japhet, son of Noah."[86] In light of the situation surrounding the racial prerequisite for citizenship and that, out of Noah's children, Japhet was the son traditionally associated with populating Europe, Rowell's reference was very deliberate.[87]

In the racial prerequisite cases, several of the reported judgments mentioned the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenian applicants' religion.[88] Judge Lowell of the U.S. First Circuit Court of Appeals provided the strongest defense of the religious and civilizational heritage of the peoples of the eastern coast of the Mediterranean. On December 24 of 1909, he explicitly rebutted Campbell's interpretation of Whiteness, stating that

> If the statutory classification should be any wise rested upon 'mental development,' or upon 'ideals, standards, and aspirations,' as suggested by the United States, a reasonable modesty may well remind Europeans that the origin of their letters was in Phoenicia, the origin of much of their art in Egypt, that Asia Minor claimed, at least, the birthplace of

[84] Rowell, "Armenians," *Fresno Morning Republican*, September 22, 1909.
[85] Ibid.
[86] Ibid.
[87] Bruce Baum, *The Rise and Fall of the Caucasian Race: A Political History of Racial Identity* (NY: New York University Press, 2009), 29.
[88] *In re Halladjian et al.*, 174 F. 834 (C.C.D. Mass. 1909); *In re Ellis*, 179 F. 1002 (D. Or. 1910); *United States v. Cartozian*, 6 F. 2d 919 (D. Or. 1925).

> the first great European poet, and the Christian religion, which most Europeans believe to have influenced their civilization and ideals, was born in Palestine.[89]

Trying to position the Armenians as White, the Fresno editor and the federal judge emphasized aspects of the immigrants' religious and civilizational heritage that they knew certain progressive-era reformers would appreciate. Recognizing the potency of the tactic, Syrian-Lebanese and Armenian individuals frequently extolled their groups' religious heritage. For instance, the Fresno Armenians depicted the Ark resting on top of Mount Ararat on their parade float for the city's Fourth of July celebration.[90]

"Expert" Authority v. Man on the Street

Another tendency of many progressives was to rely on the authority of experts to shape policy. As for Chester H. Rowell, there was no question about it – he was a "highbrow." That was the conclusion, at least, put forth by the *San Francisco Daily Times*.[91] Before running the *Fresno Republican*, Rowell had received his Bachelors Degree from the University of Michigan, worked as a clerk for the U.S. House of Representatives, learned German, French, and Italian, studied philosophy at multiple universities in Germany, and taught at a small college in Kansas before serving as an instructor at Indiana University.[92] The *Daily Times* admitted their assessment of Rowell was due partly to his intellect and partly due to his "bulging forehead and that retreating hair." "Nature made Rowell a highbrow," the columnist wrote, "and Rowell has been improving on nature for a good many years."[93] For his part, the Fresno newspaperman noted he had a reputation as "a curious sort of freak walking encyclopedia."[94]

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[89] In re Halladjian et. al., 174 F. 834 (C.C.D. Mass. 1909).
[90] Mirak, *Torn Between Two Lands*, 285.
[91] Edward F. O'Day, "Chester H. Rowell," *San Francisco Daily Times*, January 7, 1911.
[92] Everett, "Chester H. Rowell," 94-122.
[93] O'Day, "Chester H. Rowell," *San Francisco Daily Times*, January 7, 1911.
[94] Chester H. Rowell to Cora Rowell, March 10, 1898, Chester Harvey Rowell Papers, Box 2, Folder "1897, 1898," Sanoian Special Collections Library, Fresno, California.

While there were well-educated individuals across the factions and parties of progressive-era California, the *Daily Times* embraced the stereotype that "being a highbrow in literature and journalism is pretty much the same thing as being a reformer in politics."[95] Many progressives did tend to look to experts for help answering complicated societal and political questions. Zeidel describes the progressives engaging in a three part modus operandi, whereby they would identify a societal ill, consult the advice of authorities in the fields related to the problem, and implement solutions based off of the experts' advice.[96] After the question of the Armenians' racial eligibility to citizenship arose during Hagopian's case, Rowell pointed to T. H. Huxley, a British biologist from Oxford who classed Arabs and Armenians alongside several European groups as "dark white."[97]

Relying on a mix of linguistic and physical traits, nineteenth and early twentieth century ethnologists had followed Johann Bluemenbach's lead and generally placed the two groups in divisions within the "Caucasian race." In the initial racial prerequisite cases for the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians, judges turned to the works of ethnological authorities to the immigrants' benefit. Judges Newman and Wolverton looked to a range of specialists including H.A. Keane, Daniel G. Brinton, and Joseph Deniker to support the claims of the Syrian-Lebanese to Whiteness.[98] Judge Lowell, assessing the Armenians' racial status in the case *In re Halladjian*, was even more detailed:

> a casual examination of books on ethnology, standing together on the shelves of a large library, old and new, weightly [sic] and unimportant, shows complete agreement in the proposition that Armenians are to be classified as white or Caucasian, rather than as Mongolian or yellow. Figuier, Brace, Keane, Pickering, Brinton, Hutchinson, Jeffries,

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[95] O'Day, "Chester H. Rowell," *San Francisco Daily Times*, January 7, 1911.
[96] Zeidel, *Immigration, Progressives, and Exclusion Politics*, 21.
[97] Rowell, "Are 'Europeans,'" *Fresno Morning Republican*, September 27, 1909; T. H. Huxley, "On the Geographical Distribution of the Chief Modifications of Mankind," *The Journal of the Ethnological Society of London* 2, No. 4 (1870): 408.
[98] *In re Najour*, 174 F. 735 (N.D. Ga. 1909); *In re Ellis*, 179 F. 1002 (D. Or. 1910).

> Pritchett, and Retzel, authors taken quite at random, all reach the same conclusion. This is true of Blumenbach, an influential author of the eighteenth century, and of Quatrefages and Huxley about a century later.[99]

In *White By Law*, López notes that judges in the prerequisite cases often looked to the authority of ethnological experts, describing the trend as the "scientific evidence" rationale.[100]

One of the other justifications that López lists involves that of "common knowledge."[101] For example, Campbell was invoking the "common knowledge" rationalization when he wrote to Beatty in 1909 that "the average man in the street" understood distinctly that Syrian-Lebanese immigrants were not White, even if he could not define who or what, precisely, constituted the White race.[102] López describes the common knowledge and scientific evidence rationales "predominat[ing]" the rulings in the racial prerequisite cases. Between 1909 and 1914, the judges assessing "Syrians" and Armenians often differed as to whether they should give more credence to the opinion of ethnological experts or the understanding of the common man.[103]

This split is reminiscent of one of the fundamental divides in progressivism, where some reformers' reliance on scientific experts clashed with those in the progressive movement who preferred to frame themselves as working on behalf of the nebulous but ubiquitous group, "the people." The historian John D. Buenker noted these competing impulses divided reformers, writing that in the early twentieth century there were "two reasonably distinct strains" of progressive politicians. The first group he referred to as the "patricians." The patrician strain, encompassing the people the *San Francisco Daily Times* would probably refer to as highbrows,

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99 *In re Halladjian et. al.*, 174 F. 834 (C.C.D. Mass. 1909).
100 López, *White By Law*, 5.
101 Ibid.
102 Campbell to Beatty, July 19,1909, quoted in "Why the Turk is not a White Man," *Fresno Morning Republican*, September 27, 1909.
103 Judges Newman and Lowell relied on the racial understanding of experts while Judge Smith disparaged ethnological interpretations and preferred "common understanding" rationales. See *In re Najour*, 174 F. 735 (N.D. Ga. 1909); *In re Halladjian et al.*, 174 F. 834 (C.C.D. Mass. 1909); *In re Mudarri*, 176 F. 465 (C.C.D. Mass. 1910); *Ex parte Shahid*, 205 F. 812 (E.D.S.C. 1913); *Ex parte Dow*, 211 F. 486 (E.D.S.C. 1914); and *In re Dow*, 213 F. 355 (E.D.S.C. 1914).

"aimed at removing the machinery of government as far as possible from the great mass of voters" and "preoccupied itself with structure and purification, [which] 'resulted in concentrating control in the hands of experts who would exercise their professional discretion.'"[104] The opposing impulse involved the "popular strain," which "sought to open up the political process still further, broadening the franchise and allowing popular participation at levels of decision making where it had never before been permitted."[105] Judges had brought up the rationales of expert analysis and common knowledge somewhat sporadically in previous cases, such as *In re Ah Yup* and *In re Saito* – but the reasoning resonated strongly during the progressive era.

The Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians seemed to be doing well in the reported racial prerequisite cases in the years immediately following Campbell's efforts to insert the Naturalization Division into the matter. In December of 1909, the group won in a district court in Georgia; in January of 1910, they succeeded in Lowell's circuit court in Massachusetts; and later that summer Judge Wolverton in Oregon ruled in favor of their racial eligibility.[106] The Armenians also won their only reported case during this period.[107] In 1913, however, Syrian-Lebanese immigrants ran into difficulty when they went before Henry Augustus Middleton Smith, whom President Robert Taft had appointed U.S. District Judge for Eastern South Carolina in 1911.

In the cases before Smith, the applicants and their allies emphasized the same traits that Rowell and previous judges had admired, including the intellectual and moral qualifications of the Syrian-Lebanese, their connection to Christianity, and their categorization within ethnology as Caucasians. Smith discarded each argument one by one. "The law, as enacted by Congress,

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[104] John D. Buenker, *Urban Liberalism and Progressive Reform* (NY: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1978), 119-120.
[105] Ibid., 119.
[106] *In re Najour*, 174 F. 735 (N.D. Ga. 1909); *In re Mudarri*, 176 F. 465 (C.C.D. Mass. 1910);
[107] *In re Halladjian et al.*, 174 F. 834 (C.C.D. Mass. 1909).

gives no place for the consideration of intellectual or moral qualifications or past achievements in a nation or people," he wrote.[108] He also derided the immigrants' argument that they were connected to the "cradle of the Jewish and Christian religions," stating that the argument was "unworthy of consideration" and "of the emotional ad captandum order."[109] The invocation of eighteenth and nineteenth century ethnology fared little better with Smith, who derided the term "Caucasian" as "Blumenbach's ill-chosen classification."[110]

Instead, Smith repeatedly chose to prioritize the rationale of common knowledge above all others. He emphasized Whiteness as it was "naturally" and "commonly known," especially by the "average citizen" at the time of the original statute's formulation in 1790. The understanding of the man on the street was so ill defined it became the preferred explanation for those who wished to exclude groups from naturalization, as the U.S. Supreme Court discovered when they used the rationalization to rule Indian immigrants were ineligible to citizenship.

Despite Smith's certainty that the immigrants were commonly known to be "Asiatics," historical sources documenting even the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians' most vocal critics run counter to the judge's narrative. For example, children's writer Maud Hart Lovelace grew up next to a small settlement of Syrian-Lebanese immigrants in Mankato, Minnesota at the turn of the twentieth century. In her Betsy-Tacy series, based off of the author's experiences as a child, the protagonists fight off a group of boys who were calling a Syrian-Lebanese girl a "dago," a slur typically used against Italians.[111] In the Broadway show *Anna Ascends*, an Irish character insulted a Syrian-Lebanese man by alternatively referring to him as a "Wop" or a "Dago."[112] A case before the Nebraska Supreme Court in the 1920s documented that a gang of nativists

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[108] *Ex parte Shahid*, 205 F. 812 (E.D.S.C. 1914).
[109] Ibid.
[110] *In re Dow*, 213 F. 355 (E.D.S.C. 1914).
[111] Maud Hart Lovelace, *Betsy and Tacy Go Over the Big Hill* (New York: Harper & Row, 1942), 70-71.
[112] Gualtieri, *Between Arab and White*, 142.

repeatedly shouted "dago" while attacking Syrian-Lebanese party-goers.[113] In his auto-biography, an Armenian doctor named Herond Sheranian reported being bullied with the same slur as a youth.[114] A Syrian-Lebanese woman named Nazha recalled in an oral history interview that other Americans used the words "dago" or "sheeny" to denigrate her and her mother. "They had specific names for other ethnic groups," Nazha said, "but not for the Syrians."[115] While in all likelihood the groups' bullies were simply falling back on the insults with which they were most familiar, their use of Italian, Polish, and Jewish slurs indicate that, contrary to Smith and Campbell's interpretation, the "average man in the street" did not reflexively associate the Syrian-Lebanese or Armenians with Asians. Rather, the common knowledge rationale was simply Judge Smith's only option if he wanted to exclude Dow's people from citizenship because other potential rationales – legal precedent, ethnology, and the civilizational heritage of the Syrian-Lebanese – would help rather than hurt the immigrant group.

Kalil A. Bishara and Mrs. Otis Floyd Lamson

After Judge Smith ruled against Shahid and Dow, the Syrian-Lebanese community mobilized, once again, to defend their racial status. They formed the Syrian Society for National Defense (SSND) and began raising funds to pay Dow's legal expenses.[116] Dow also petitioned for a rehearing of the case. Smith assented to the request but used the opportunity to write a longer and more detailed ruling against the group.[117] Dow's case would move from Smith's district court to the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals, but in the meantime, leaders in the immigrant community refused to wait by idly. Salloum Mokarzel, the editor of one of a

[113] *Lewis Ford Denison v. State of Nebraska*, 117 Neb. 601, 221 N.W. 683 (1928 Neb.).
[114] Herond Nishan Sheranian, *Odyssey of an Armenian Doctor* (n.p.: n.p., 1970), 34.
[115] Nazha H. quoted in Naff, *Becoming American*, 142.
[116] Gualtieri, *Between Arab and White*, 71.
[117] *In re Dow*, 213 F. 355 (E.D.S.C. 1914).

prominent Arabic language press in New York City, persuaded his friend Kalil Bishara to write a short book defending the group's status as "White," which Morkarzel published at his own expense.[118] Published in 1915 ahead of Dow's appeal, Bishara entitled his publication *The Origin of the Modern Syrian* and dedicated the work to "The personified 'common sense' of the American people, in the name of the 'Square Deal' in behalf of the Syrian immigrant."[119] His reference to the '"common sense' of the American people" sounds rather similar to Smith's reason for rejecting the racial eligibility of the Syrian-Lebanese, while the "'Square Deal'" was the name Theodore Roosevelt had used to describe his agenda of progressive reforms. In one dedication, Bishara simultaneously appropriated Smith's judicial conceptualization and Roosevelt's campaign rhetoric to advance the interests of his community.

Bishara's treatise echoes many of the rationales regarding assimilation and civilizational history that Rowell and judges like Lowell and Wolverton found persuasive. Bishara described the typical Syrian-Lebanese individual as "the living picture of Cosmopolitanism … more able to adapt himself to his environment than any other immigrant." He stressed that the immigrants were descendants of the ancient Phoenicians – well-known traders who were among the first peoples to develop an alphabetic script – and as such, "the world is indebted to the Syrian with regard to the evolution of its civilization, wealth, and material prosperity." Bishara continued that the Semitic race had given the world "a host of prophets, fathers, and apostles."[120]

The Syrian-Lebanese author did not hesitate to distance the Syrian-Lebanese from other immigrant groups. He claimed that "the Chinese and Japanese and other people of the far East … have a peculiar type of civilization of their own so radically different from our Christian civilization as to make racial amalgamation and national assimilation [of] all Mongolian

[118] Kalil A. Bishara, *The Origin of the Modern Syrian* (New York: Al-Hoda Publishing House, 1914), 3.
[119] Ibid., 4.
[120] Ibid., 40, 46, 47.

immigrants almost impossible.[121] And, showing his familiarity with Progressive Era immigration law, Bishara asked his readers to "not forget that if our country is flooded with criminals, anarchists, and extreme socialists, these pestilential parasites are coming to our shores, not from Syria, nor from any part of Asia, but from South Europe."[122] Bishara's description of undesirable types of immigrants succinctly summarizes Section Three of the 1913 immigration bill written by Congressman Burnett, the progressive nativist Elkourie was responding to in 1907.[123] As Gualtieri notes, after years of navigating the prerequisite cases, Bishara and other Syrian-Lebanese individuals were increasingly willing to use racial labels to distance themselves from other groups.

Bishara very deliberately placed the Syrian-Lebanese on the right side of immigration law because he knew the importance of such issues to Progressive Era policy-makers. He emphasized the immigrants' assimilability and civilizational history because those ideas were part of the rhetoric of those in power. Bishara denigrated Asian and European groups in a manner reminiscent of Burnett and Rowell, distancing the Syrian-Lebanese from other immigrants in ways that would resonate with selectively racist progressives. The Syrian-Lebanese author's passage about Asian civilization would fit just as neatly into one of Rowell's editorials as his reference to Southern European criminals would into one of Burnett's speeches on the floor of Congress.

In 1915, the Syrian-Lebanese appealed Smith's rulings against Dow to the U.S. Fourth Circuit court of appeals. Judge Woods, a Wilson appointee, wrote the opinion in the case, arguing in *Dow v. United States et al.* that Smith's focus on how the term "free White person" was commonly understood in 1790 was incorrect. According to Woods, all of the ethnological

[121] Ibid., 40.
[122] Ibid., 41.
[123] *Cong. Rec.,* 62nd Cong, 3d sess. 1913, 49, pt. 2: 2035-2036.

works that had come out in the intervening years had fostered a "growth of popular and legislative conception of the meaning of 'free white persons.'" The Fourth Circuit Court ultimately reversed Smith's decisions, stating that by 1875, the last time Congress had slightly amended wording of the 1790 naturalization law, "the consensus of opinion at the time of the enactment of the statute now in force was that [the Syrian-Lebanese] were so closely related to their neighbors on the European side of the Mediterranean that they should be classed as white [so] they must be held to fall within the term 'white persons' used in the statute."[124]

The concept of common knowledge was extremely malleable but gaining increasing currency amongst judges, especially after the Supreme Court gave precedence to the rationale when ruling against Indian immigrants' racial eligibility to citizenship in 1923 in *United States v. Thind*. After Commissioner Crist pushed the question of the Armenians' racial status back into the courts in 1924, Malcolm and other members of the immigrant community began to prepare for Cartozian's case.

Malcolm's defense committee raised an impressive sum of money so that they could hire some of the top legal talent in Portland to represent Cartozian. They also began to carefully consider who to bring in as witnesses on behalf of Cartozian. In the article "On the Boundary of White," Craver describes the nine Armenian witnesses Malcolm recruited in detail. Each individual had characteristics calculated to reinforce the notion that the immigrants could and would assimilate. Two were Protestant ministers and all but Malcolm were part of Protestant denominations. Every witness demonstrated his or her fluency in English. Six of the nine had married "persons described either as being of American stock or of German or French-Swiss birth."[125] Malcolm, who had written a book on Armenian-Americans in 1919, attempted to

[124] *Dow v. United States*.
[125] Craver, "On the Boundary of White," 47.

reinforce the idea of the Armenians' assimilability as well by providing Wolverton, Cartozian's judge, with statistics regarding the number of individuals who had become U.S. citizens, married non-Armenian spouses, or attained jobs in law and other professional fields.[126]

One of the most effective witnesses, according to Cartozian's lawyer, was an Armenian woman whom Judge Wolverton referred to as "Mrs. Otis Floyd Lamson."[127] Craver describes Lamson, who was born as Aremenouhi Tashjian in the city of Erzerum, as a "thirty-seven-year-old mother of three" and "attractive, charming and self-confident."[128] The daughter of a Congregationalist minister, Lamson was educated at the University of Berlin, spoke half a dozen languages, and married an American-born doctor who was a former football player for the University of Pennsylvania.[129] During World War One, she travelled the country to help recruit Armenians to serve in the U.S. armed forces. Living in Seattle at the time of Cartozian's case, she was a suffragist and was active in several civic and social organizations.[130] Each aspect of Lamson's background reinforced the argument that the Armenians were capable of thriving in the United States.

Also among Cartozian's witnesses were two Ivy League anthropologists, Roland Burrage Dixon and Franz Boas. In his ruling, Wolverton emphasized Dixon's testimony:

> The witness Dixon, a profound scholar, now professor of anthropology at Harvard University, who has written extensively on anthropology and ethnology, and who attended President Wilson as a government representative on the subject of ethnography during the Peace Conferences at Versailles, gives it as his conviction that the weight of authority is overwhelmingly in favor of the proposition that Armenians are white persons, and that Caucasian and European, as used in common speech, are practically synonymous; at least such is the case in current usage. He further affirms that the Armenians readily assimilate with the people of France, Germany, and Russia.

[126] Ibid., 48.
[127] Ibid., 46.
[128] Ibid.
[129] *United States v. Cartozian*; Craver, "On the Boundary of White," 46-47.
[130] Craver, "On the Boundary of White," 46-47.

By using the Harvard anthropologist to invoke the ways in which Whiteness was understood "in common speech," the Armenians were able to neatly combine the appeals to expert authority and common knowledge to help satisfy the criterion put forth in *United States v. Thind*. For good measure, Dixon also cited the opinions of several prominent ethnologists that the Armenians were of the "Alpine race."[131]

The representative for the U.S. government, John Coke, stressed the issue of "the race prejudice" against Armenians in the United States.[132] Courts could potentially use the question of racial animosity as evidence that the Armenians were not "commonly known" as White, taking it for granted that native-born Americans would only show racial prejudice against groups they considered to be Non-White. From Coke's perspective, stressing the common knowledge rationale makes sense, in that the question served as the determining factor in *United States v. Thind* and would undoubtedly arise again in the event that Cartozian's case ended up before the Supreme Court. Wolverton, however, found the Armenians' testimony and arguments to be far more persuasive. His 1925 ruling, which quoted Cartozian's witnesses at length, rewarded the Armenians' well-orchestrated efforts. The Armenians, Wolverton wrote, "are of Alpine stock, of European persuasion," "are white persons as commonly recognized in speech of common usage," and "amalgamate readily with the white races, including the white people of the United States." "The testimony here adduced," he continued, "would seem to meet the concept essential to eligibility for naturalization under section 2169, R.S."[133] When the U.S. Justice Department decided not to appeal, Wolverton's decision settled the issue in the Armenians' favor. *Cartozian* became the last reported racial prerequisite case involving either the Syrian-Lebanese or Armenians.

[131] *United States v. Cartozian*.
[132] Craver, "On the Boundary of White," 49.
[133] *United States v. Cartozian*.

During the reported cases, several concepts came up again and again. Rowell, federal judges, and even the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians themselves, frequently drew from similar pools of rhetoric and ideas. They emphasized the immigrants' assimilative capacities. They repeatedly discussed the ethnological understandings of experts and of the common man. They made implicit and explicit comparisons between groups and often described the immigrants' religious and civilizational contributions. The regularity with which the topics arose indicate that the Syrian-Lebanese, the Armenians, their lawyers, and their political allies understood these ideas could persuade federal judges that the groups were "White" and capable of becoming American citizens.[134]

[134] Of the fifty-two reported racial prerequisite cases between 1878 and 1952, nine involved Armenian or "Syrian" individuals. Six of the nine cases ended in the groups' favor; the three that did not all took place in front of the same court and judge. On December 10, 1909, prior to all of the Syrian-Lebanese's reported cases but *In re Najour*, Campbell admitted that "in the majority of cases," judges had ruled the group was eligible to citizenship, indicating that the reported rulings in the Syrian-Lebanese's favor were not unusual. Richard K. Campbell to E.J. Hill, December 10, 1909, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/67, National Archives, Washington D.C.; Memorandum, Raymond F. Crist, November 5, 1909, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/43, National Archives, Washington D.C.

CHAPTER 5

CREATING LEGISLATIVE EXCEPTIONS TO EXCLUSION

Congressional Efforts

Not only did the matter of the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians' racial status play out at the judicial level, but the question arose in Congress as well. Members of the House and Senate devoted little floor time to pontificating on the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians' race. Rather, the action unfolded in committee rooms and across the pages of bureaucratic correspondence as the House Immigration and Naturalization Committee, the Senate Immigration Committee, and the Labor Department considered the matter.

Working in consultation with each other, these entities produced a remarkable provision in the 1917 Immigration Act known as the Asiatic Barred Zone. Section Three of the legislation quite literally drew longitudinal and latitudinal lines of inclusion and exclusion across the Asian Continent in an effort to keep out laborers from specific immigrant groups. In many ways, the Asiatic Barred Zone served as a prelude to the 1924 Quota Act, which excluded all "alien[s] ineligible to citizenship." In neither piece of legislation did Congress include Syrian-Lebanese or Armenian immigrants as ineligible to citizenship, nor do the lines of the Asiatic Barred Zone encompass the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians' homelands. Congress built in multiple protections for the two groups in 1917 and kept them from being totally excluded in 1924, but the roots of the story lie earlier in the Progressive Era with the actions of an obscure California congressman named Everis Anson Hayes.

"Old Prunes"

Chester H. Rowell's father was a four-term Republican Congressman. Alice Stone Blackwell's parents were leaders in Boston's anti-slavery and women's suffrage movement. The matriarch of Hayes' family, Mary Hayes-Chynoweth, wore several less-conventional hats as a psychic, healer, and spiritualist leader.[1] Hayes-Chynoweth gained prominence throughout the late nineteenth-century treating the ailments of Wisconsin politicians and predicting economic downturns.[2] In 1883, the story goes, she acted on a premonition and sent out her two sons, Everis and Jay Hayes, to buy land deep in the forests of northern Wisconsin. The property turned out to hold a large deposit of iron-ore, which, once mined, made her family extremely wealthy.[3]

Lawyers by trade, the Hayes brothers used the profits from their mines to diversify their holdings. In 1887, they moved their family near San Jose, California, where the two men purchased a large swathe of orchards and built one of the largest mansions in the area. The Hayes family enjoyed success producing fruit, particularly prunes. It did not take long for the two brothers to gain notoriety in San Jose, where the people referred to Everis and Jay "Red Hayes" and "Black Hayes," after the colors of their respective beards.[4] After Everis became a Congressman in the early 1900s, Theodore Roosevelt affectionately nicknamed him "Old Prunes" – supposedly to Hayes' great delight.[5]

Ambitious men, the two brothers looked to get more involved San Jose's affairs, but ran up against "the Push." The Push was San Jose's local political machine, led by John Mackenzie,

[1] Mary Farrell Bednarowski, "Spiritualism in Wisconsin in the Nineteenth Century," *The Wisconsin Magazine of History* 59, No. 1 (Autumn, 1975): 15-18.
[2] "Mary Hayes-Chynoweth, Psychic Healer," *Wisconsin Historical Society*, https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Article/CS309 (accessed August 20, 2017).
[3] Bednarowski, "Spiritualism in Wisconsin in the Nineteenth Century," 16;
[4] Elystus Lyon Hayes, *The Hayes Family: The Reminisces of Elystus L. Hayes*, (N.p.: Claire K. Berlin, 1971), 35.
[5] Ibid.

the Chair of the Santa Clara Republican central committee, and John Rea, who had founded the Electric Improvement Company and had ties to the Southern Pacific Railway Company. The organization had a stranglehold on the city's government, controlling nearly every appointed position in San Jose from the ballot clerks to the administrators of the insane asylum. Shut out of the political power structure, prominent individuals from Santa Clara County's business community and agricultural industries created the San Jose Good Government League in an attempt to reform the city charter, improve the efficiency of city's government, and beat the Push's nominees at the ballot box.[6]

Everis Hayes served as the first president of the San Jose Good Government League, which counted several growers and packers amongst its ranks. Leading the League, Hayes was ruthlessly pragmatic in his pursuit of progressive reform. In 1898, the League's candidates were not as successful as he hoped, in part due to the opposition of the San Jose's three major papers, which were friendly to or controlled by the Push. Employing the strategy of horizontal integration, the Hayes brothers bought two of the three, the *San Jose Daily Mercury* and the *San Jose Daily Herald*, around the turn of the century. Their sons completed the process when they bought the last of the three, the *San Jose News*, in 1942.[7] Similarly, in 1902, Hayes "recruited" Rea from the Push to the reformers' side, looking to employ his knowledge of San Jose's politics.[8] In 1904, California's fifth district elected Hayes to the U.S. House, but due to his facility with what one scholar calls "San Jose's less pristine progressivism," he had trouble gaining the full trust of other reformers.[9]

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[6] Article I, Minutes of the San Jose Good Government League (1899-1903), San Jose Historical Museum, San Jose, 1; Timothy J. Lukes, "Progressivism Off-Broadway: Reform Politics in San Jose, California, 1880-1920," *Southern California Quarterly* 76, No. 4 (Winter 1994): 367-368, 387-388.
[7] Jessica Trounstine, "Challenging the Machine-Reform Dichotomy: Two Threats to Urban Democracy" in *The City in American Political Development*, edited by Richardson Dilworth (NY: Routledge, 2009): 82.
[8] Lukes, "Progressivism Off-Broadway," 389-390.
[9] Ibid., 395.

The Hayes brothers aspired to higher office, but their brand of progressivism alienated California Republicans of all stripes. In 1910, when Rowell was searching for a gubernatorial nominee, he rejected the idea of Everis Hayes serving as the progressives' standard-bearer.[10] Rowell told a writer for *Colliers Weekly* that he supported Hayes at the congressional level "because of his ostensible insurgency." Nevertheless, Rowell noted, "nobody trusts him."[11] While Rowell's misgivings helped keep Everis from the governorship in 1910, opposition from the infamous San Francisco political boss, Abe Ruef, prevented his brother Jay from securing the Republican nomination for the same office in 1906.[12] Ultimately, Jay remained in charge of the newspapers and other family businesses while Everis served in Congress from 1905 to 1919.[13]

As the member of the House of Representatives, Hayes was known primarily as one of the architects of the legislation creating the Federal Reserve and as a leader in the movement to restrict Asian immigration to the United States.[14] Hayes claimed that "[p]ractically the only speeches that have been made on this floor until the last session or two in favor of the exclusion of all Asiatics from this country have been made by myself, and I have made a speech of that kind in almost every session that I have been a Member of this House."[15] Given his frequent rhetorical broadsides against Japanese laborers and other groups, it is interesting to note that he periodically introduced legislation benefitting Syrian-Lebanese and Armenian immigrants.

Naturalizing Syrians, Armenians, and Jews

In Donald's A. Ritchie's chapter "Congress Confronts the Armenian Genocide," the author writes that legislation favoring Armenian immigrants can be traced back to 1910, when "a

[10] Ibid., 395-396.
[11] Chester H. Rowell to Mark Sullivan, May 27, 1910, , Chester H. Rowell Papers, BANC MSS C-B 401, Box 1, Folder "1910," The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.
[12] Hayes, *The Hayes Family*, 37.
[13] Ibid., 36.
[14] Ibid., 35.
[15] *Cong. Rec.*, 63d Cong., 2d sess., 1914: 2820.

California Representative, Everis Anson Hayes, of San Jose, took the lead in amending immigration and naturalization laws, to assist Armenians, Syrians and Jews."[16] Ritchie is referring to two similar bills introduced by Hayes on April 5, 1910 and April 26, 1910. The first was H.R. 24075, which amended Section 2169 of the U.S. Revised Statutes by adding the sentence, "Mongolians, Malays, and other Asiatics, except Armenians, Assyrians, and Jews, shall not be naturalized in the United States."[17] A few weeks later he introduced H.R. 24993, which rephrased the langauge his previous bill by stating that nothing in Section 2169 "shall be so construed as to prevent Asiatics who are Armenians, Syrians, or Jews from becoming naturalized citizens."[18] He then guided H.R. 24993 through the House Immigration and Naturalization Committee, of which he was a member, as well as through the House of Representatives itself, where it passed on a voice vote.[19] Given Hayes' animosity towards Asian immigrants – he had introduced a bill just a few months earlier banning immigrants ineligible to citizenship from entering the country – the story of "A bill to amend Section 2169 of the Revised Statutes of the United States" is brief but intriguing.[20]

Introduced to the House on April 26, 1910, Hayes' legislation went from non-existent to passing the chamber in less than a week. [21] The House referred the bill back to the Committee on Immigration and Naturalization, where, on April 27, Hayes issued Report No. 1150. Favorably recommending H.R. 24993 on behalf of the House committee, the congressman wrote,

> This bill speaks for itself. It is intended to make more certain the status under the naturalization laws of Armenians, Syrians, and Jews. In certain sections of the country there has been manifested a disposition to exclude these people in common with

[16] Donald Ritchie, "Congress Confronts the Armenian Genocide," in *America and the Armenian Genocide of 1915*, Jay Winter ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 290.
[17] *Cong. Rec.*, 61st Cong., 2d sess., 1910: 4310; *Proceedings of the Asiatic Exclusion League, April 1910* (San Francisco: Organized Labor Print, 1910), 7.
[18] Text of the bill can be found in *Cong. Rec.*, 61st Cong., 2d sess., 1910: 5674.
[19] *Cong. Rec.*, 61st Cong., 2d sess., 1910: 5674.
[20] *Proceedings of the Asiatic Exclusion League, April 1910*,
[21] *Cong. Rec.*, 61st Cong., 2d sess., 1910: 5432.

Mongolians and other Asiatics from naturalization. If the bill becomes a law it will set at rest the question of their right to naturalization under our laws.[22]

On May 2, 1910, the bill then went back to the full House of Representatives. Hayes steadily fielded the questions on the legislation from his fellow Congressmen, who wanted to know whether "Hindoos" were included as well, why the bill singled out Syrians, Armenians and Jews, and if the Division of Naturalization approved of H.R. 24993. Hayes answered each question rather succinctly. No, he stated, Indian immigrants were not included because they were not Christian and were "undesirable for many reasons." Syrians and Armenians were included, Hayes said, "at the suggestion of the Division of Naturalization" because "there has arisen in different sections of the country a difference of opinion as to whether these two nationalities are entitled to naturalization or not under the present law." Answering the question as to whether or not the Division of Naturalization had reported on H.R. 24993, Hayes claimed "[i]t has, and, in fact, it is their bill."[23] The House bill passed the chamber on May 2, 1910; the next day, the Senate referred the bill to the chamber's Immigration Committee.[24] The legislation died when the Senate Immigration Committee took no further action on the bill.[25]

Hayes' claim that H.R. 24993 was the Naturalization Division's bill is strange, to say the least. Internal documents from the division indicate that it saw Armenian immigrants as non-White and ineligible to citizenship up until 1923, when Crist replaced Campbell.[26] While

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[22] House Committee on Immigration and Naturalization, *Amending Statutes Relating to Naturalization*, 61st Cong., 2d sess., 1910, H. Rep. 1150, 1.
[23] *Cong. Rec.*, 61st Cong., 2d sess., 1910: 5674.
[24] *Cong. Rec.*, 61st Cong., 2d sess., 1910: 5697, 5703.
[25] The American Jewish Committee took credit for convincing the Senate to let the bill die in committee, fearing that HR 24993, "by an inference which might be drawn, classified the Jews among those who were not 'white persons.'" It is unclear to which term or group the organization objected; they could have conceivably been referring to those mentioned in HR 24993, such as "Syrians," "Armenians," or "Asiatics," or groups added to the Section 2169 of the Revised Statutes during Reconstruction like "aliens of African nativity" and "persons of African descent." Herbert Friedenwald, ed., "Fourth Annual Report of the American Jewish Committee: November 13, 1910, " The American Jewish Year Book 13, (September 23, 1911 to September 11, 1912): 304.
[26] Unknown to John G. Sargent, October 12, 1925, RG 85, Box 1573, File 19783/43, National Archives, Washington D.C.

various judges had, between December of 1909 and January of 1910, issued favorable judgements towards the two groups, it is strange to imagine Campbell changing his opinion on the groups so rapidly and to such an extent that he would propose legislation benefitting the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians to Congress. Regardless, it is worth noting that Hayes, the representative who claimed he had proposed excluding Asiatics from entering the country in almost every session since 1905, was under no obligation to shepherd the bill through the House.

In *Impossible Subjects*, Ngai writes that "immigration policy is constutive of Americans' understanding of national membership and citizenship, drawing lines of inclusion or exclusion that articulate a desired composition – imagined if not necessarily realized – of the nation."[27] Defining certain groups as eligible to citizenship under Section 2169 was especialaly revealing, for H.R. 24993 put forth the idea that Syrian-Lebanese, Armenian, and Jewish immigrants were not just worthy of American citizenship, but that they also shared a similar racial identity with the bill's author.[28] Hayes, whose bread and butter issue was opposing Asian immigration, would not have introduced the bill in the House, nor provided it with a favorable report from his station on the Immigration and Naturalization Committee, nor advocated for the bill on the floor of Congress, unless he believed the groups were worthy of the status of being racially eligible to citizenship.

One possible reason Hayes might have been drawn to helping the groups listed in the bill involves the connection both he and the San Joaquin Valley Armenian community shared to

[27] Mae M. Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2004), 5.
[28] While Section 2169 refers to "White persons," "aliens of African nativity," and "persons of African descent," it is difficult to imagine Hayes sought to classify the groups as of "African nativity" or "African descent" given that geographically the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians were from the Asian continent, ethnologically they had generally been labeled as Semites and Aryans (respectively), and legally there were no reported decisions in the racial prerequisite cases where either group was considered "Black."

California's fruit industry. Many Armenian immigrants came from commercial backgrounds, arrived in California with capital, and willingly took risks using the entirety of their savings to purchase the best agricultural lands available across the San Joaquin Valley.[29] Mirak estimates that, in 1908, Armenian individuals held 25,000 total acres of land across the valley. Somewhere between 16,000 to 20,000 of those acres were vineyards, with the Armenian community dominating the area's raisin industry.[30] Individual families, Mirak writes, also proved to be extremely succesful growing figs and melons. For example, after Henry Markarian and his son figured out how to produce white Adriatic figs in California, they became the largest fig growers in the United States and came to control "twenty percent of domestic production."[31] Krikor Arakelian, known as "the Melon King," owned packinghouses, thousands of acres of vineyards, and "initiated large-scale melon growing in the San Joaquin Valley."[32]

During the early 1900s, Hayes' brother Jay continued to remain heavily involved in Santa Clara's fruit industry, just a county away from the outter edges of the San Joaquin Valley. The Hayes brothers entered into the fruit business as prune growers at roughly the same time as Armenian individuals started producing raisins and figs. Jay Hayes worked with other growers to create "a statewide information network" and eventually helped establish the Santa Clara Valley Fruit Growers Association and the California Prune and Apricot Growers Association.[33] According to the *Fresno Republican* in 1909, prominent Armenian growers were also "stalwart cooperative supporters."[34] As leading California growers, it is likely that the Hayes brothers took note of the immigrants' success in a field so similar to their own.

[29] Mirak, *Torn Between Two Lands*, 113-114.
[30] Ibid., 119.
[31] Ibid., 120.
[32] Ibid., 120-121.
[33] Lukes, "Progressivism Off-Broadway: Reform Politics in San Jose, California, 1880-1920," 390-391.
[34] Mirak, *Torn Between Two Lands*, 119.

Burnett's Bills

In the 1910 general election, Hayes beat his Democratic, Socialist, and Prohibitionist opponents by a wide margin, even as the Republican party lost control of the House. The chairmanship of the House Immigration and Naturalization Committee passed to John Lawson Burnett, the same progressive Alabama Democrat who had said Syrian, Jewish, Russian, and Polish immigrants were not of the White race back in 1907. The former chairman, Benjamin Howell, was among the Republicans who lost their reelection bids, leaving Hayes to become the ranking member of the committee. He introduced bills similar to those he had written in the prior Congress, including proposals to ban aliens ineligible to citizenship from entering the country and another bill specifying Syrians, Armenians, and Jews were eligible to naturalize under Section 2169 of the Revised Statutes.[35]

With the change in party control, Hayes had less success getting his bills as stand-alone measures before the House. Consequently, he changed tactics and tried to add amendments to legislation written by Burnett, the new chairman of the House Immigration and Naturalization Committee. Burnett desperately wanted to restrict immigration through the creation of a literacy test, a proposal that proved popular with both Congressional Republicans and Democrats. Legislation containing the literacy test passed both houses in 1913, whereupon Taft vetoed the measure.[36] During Wilson's administration, Burnett again got the bill through Congress, only to witness the president veto it once again.[37] In 1917, he marshaled enough votes to pass the bill through the House and Senate and to override Wilson's veto.[38] Given Burnett's control of the House Immigration and Naturalization Committee and the popularity of the literacy test in

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[35] Herbert Friedenwald, ed., "The Government of the United States and Affairs of Interest to the Jews," *The American Jewish Year Book* 13, (September 23, 1911 to September 11, 1912): 304.
[36] Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, 191.
[37] Ibid., 192-193.
[38] Ibid., 203-204.

Congress, restrictionist measures stood the best chance of passage when their authors added them onto the Alabama representative's bills. The Anti-Asian proposals added to Burnett's bills were similar, in that they targeted Asian laborers, frequently building in exceptions for various professional classes.[39] The measures frequently differed, however, from author to author, when it came to defining the term "Asian."

In 1913, another California progressive, a Democrat named John E. Raker, accepted a position on Burnett's committee. Raker and Hayes had similar goals when it came to immigration restriction, but often differed on points of emphasis and the legislative language they would use.[40] For instance, rather than supporting Hayes' language to exclude those "ineligible to citizenship" from entering the country, Raker preferred a more explicit ban on "Asiatic laborers."[41] The staunchest opponents of Asian immigration, such as the members of the Asiatic Exclusion League, preferred Raker's language, claiming Hayes' wording could allow groups like Indians to enter the United States if the courts interpreted Section 2169 in their favor.[42]

In May of 1913, Raker contacted the head of the U.S. Immigration Bureau, Daniel J. Keefe, and his superior, Secretary of Labor W.B. Wilson, asking them to report on his latest bill, H.R. 102. Keefe gave his assessment to Wilson, who quoted it in full in response to Raker. Keefe, a Roosevelt appointee, was just a few days away from leaving the Bureau.[43] Keefe favored immigration restriction and indicated that there were aspects of Raker's bill he was

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[39] W.W. Husband, ed., "Immigration in Congress," *The Immigration Journal* 1, no. 1 (March 1916): 6-7.
[40] See, for instance, *Cong. Rec.*, 63d Cong., 2d sess., 1914: 2818-2825.
[41] *A Bill To amend an Act entitled "An Act to regulate the immigration of aliens into the United States," approved February twentieth, nineteen hundred and seven,* H. 102, 63d Cong., 1st sess. (April 7, 1913): 1.
[42] A.E. Yoell to Richard K. Campbell, March 31, 1910 quoted in *Proceedings of the Asiatic Exclusion League, April 1910, 7; Proceedings of the Asiatic Exclusion League, March 1912* (San Francisco: Organized Labor Print, 1912), 206.
[43] U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, "Daniel J. Keefe," https://www.uscis.gov/history-and-genealogy/our-history-21 (accessed September 1, 2017).

pleased with. He realized, however, that the question of immigration from western Asia might merit more attention. Back in 1909, when the Division of Naturalization was under the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization, Keefe served as Campbell's supervisor and was involved navigating the fall out of his subordinate's actions. Well-aware of what had happened the last time that governmental officials had argued that Syrian-Lebanese and Armenian immigrants were Asiatics who should be excluded from American life, Keefe stated,

> I note … no effort is made in the proposed bill to define the term 'Asiatic.' If it is the intention to include in the provisions of the amendatory legislation all natives of the continent of Asia and of the islands usually regarded as a part of that continent, perhaps no specific definition is required…. If, on the other hand, it is not intended to include aliens coming from western Asia (Turkey, Persia, and Arabia, for instance), obviously some specific definition should be given.[44]

By positioning the question as he did, Keefe raised the issue for Raker to consider, while still leaving the matter open-ended.

By the time Keefe's assessment got back to Burnett's committee, Congressional Democrats had decided to postpone action on immigration restriction until the next session of the 63rd Congress, choosing instead to focus on the economic reforms Wilson had campaigned on in the 1912 Presidential election.[45] In early 1914, at the start of the next session, the legislative push for immigration restriction intensified once again. Burnett, who had several proposals targeting Asian immigration to consider, asked the Secretary of the Department of Labor to comment on Raker's legislation. After reading Raker's bill, Wilson, like Keefe before him, argued that the term "Asiatic" laborer was "too indefinite for the practical administrative purposes" and suggested the Congressman add a new proviso:

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[44] Daniel J. Keefe to W.B. Wilson quoted in House Committee on Immigration and Naturalization, *Letter from the Commissioner of Immigration in regard to the Immigration of Asiatic Laborers*, 63d Cong., 1st sess., 1913, H. Doc. 56, 2.

[45] Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, 191.

> *Provided*, that the term 'Asiatic laborer' for all purposes, hereof shall be understood to mean a native of any country or district, or island adjacent thereto, situate east of a line composed of the Red Sea, the Mediterranean Sea, the Aegean Sea, the Sea of Marmora, the Black Sea, the Caucasus Mountains, the Caspian Sea, the Ural River, and the Ural Mountains, with the exception of Turkey in Asia; but the said term shall not be understood to include aliens the immigration of whom into the United States is regulated by existing agreements as to passports.[46]

More simply put, the provision drew a meandering, imaginary line along the various bodies of water surrounding the western border of the Asian continent. Under Wilson's proposal, all laborers immigrating from countries and islands east of that line were excluded from entering the United States, though the secretary built in notable exceptions: "Turkey in Asia" and "aliens the immigration of whom … is regulated by existing agreements as to passports."

One of Secretary Wilson's primary goals was to use language that the Japanese government would not find to offensive. In 1913, California's efforts to bar the Japanese from purchasing land in the state had raised a furor back in Japan. President Wilson had gone so far as to order his Secretary of State to California to try to reach a compromise and prevent the issue from escalating.[47] Following the crisis in California, the Wilson administration was sensitive to any issue that would further inflame the Japanese government. By stating that the term "Asiatic laborers" would not include those whose immigration was "regulated by existing agreements as to passports" – such as Japanese immigrants coming in under the "Gentleman's Agreement" President Roosevelt had negotiated in 1907 – Secretary Wilson could easily argue he was not giving the Japanese government any cause for alarm.

One of the other noteworthy suggestions Wilson made towards Raker's bill involved specifying that the legislation not class immigrants from western Asia, specifically, from

[46] W.B. Wilson to Champ Clark, January 20, 1914 quoted in House Committee on Immigration and Naturalization, *Comment on House Bill 102*, 63d Cong., 2d sess., 1914, H. Rep. 652, 5.
[47] See Paolo E. Coletta, '"The Most Thankless Task': Bryan and the California Alien Land Legislation," *Pacific Historical Review* 36, No. 2 (May 1967): 163-187.

"Turkey in Asia," as among the "Asiatic laborers" barred from entering into the U.S. As he later told the president, it was immigrants from "southern or southeastern Asia and the islands adjacent thereto," that he saw "value" in keeping out of the United States.[48] In his assessment of Raker's bill, he was more circumspect, making it clear that he felt law-makers could make the definition of "Asiatic laborers" more or less restrictive as they saw fit: "The above is not furnished as an absolute recommendation either as to wording or as to inclusion or exclusion of countries or peoples within or from the definition…. [I]t might be thought that excepting the whole of Turkey in Asia goes too far, or even that other Asiatic countries should be included in the exception."[49] Roosevelt's Commissioner General of Immigration and Wilson's Secretary of Labor apparently saw enough merit in immigrants from western Asia to suggest changes that would benefit them, but left the ultimate decision up to the lawmakers themselves.

In early 1914, Burnett moved a version of his latest literacy test bill, HR 6060, to the floor of the House. The bill contained a provision with wording similar to bills Hayes had proposed in the past, banning "persons who can not become eligible, under existing law, to become citizens of the United States by naturalization, unless otherwise povided for by existing agreements as to passports, or by treaties … or agreements that may be entered into."[50] Both Raker and Hayes wanted to amend the language. Raker proposed substituting in the exact language Secretary Wilson had recommended, including the exception for immigrants from "Turkey in Asia."[51] According to Hayes, however, Raker had yet to discuss the language in the proposal with the House Immigration and Naturalization Committee, leaving the California Republican to point out that the proposed amendment could be interpreted as excluding

[48] W.B. Wilson to Woodrow Wilson, January 1915, William Bauchop Wilson Papers, Collection 1588, Box 113, File 53139/10, The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA.
[49] Wilson to Clark, January 20, 1914 quoted in *Comment on House Bill 102*, 5.
[50] *Cong. Rec.*, 63d Cong., 2d sess., 1914: 2818.
[51] Ibid., 2818.

Australians from immigrating into the United States.[52] Hayes suggested another amendment that clarified which races were ineligible to citizenship, specifically "Hindus and all persons of the Mongolian or yellow race, the Malay or brown race, and the African or Black race."[53] Other representatives criticized the proposals as endangering the broader bill, stating that Japan would likely take offense to both Hayes and Raker's langauge, which in turn would make it more likely that President Wilson would veto the legislation.[54] The House ultimately voted down both proposals.[55]

In 1915, Burnett's literacy bill, which contained the langauge banning laborers "who can not become eligible … to become citizens of the United States by naturalization," passed both chambers of Congress. President Wilson, who had written disparingly about immigrants earlier in his career but campaigned for their votes in 1912, ultimately vetoed the bill.[56] The House of Representatives attempted to override the veto but failed by five votes, leaving the issue to be debated, once again, in the subsequent Congress. So, in 1916, the players gathered to peform a new verse of the same song. Burnett proposed a literacy test.[57] Raker, despite the risk of other Congressman accusing him of harboring a secret hatred of Australians, put forward H.R. 363, a bill with similar language to that of his failed amendment from 1914.[58] On the Senate side, Dillingham, the head of the eponymous Dillingham Commission, submitted a bill to exclude Asian laborers using the familiar "can not become eligible" to naturalize formulation.[59]

Hayes, on the other hand, broke away from his previous phrasing. Clearly having lost patience with the subtlety of the "ineligible to citizenship" language, his latest bill explicitly

[52] Ibid., 2820.
[53] Ibid., 2824.
[54] Ibid., 2820-2821, 2824.
[55] Ibid., 2825.
[56] Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, 191-193.
[57] Husband, ed., "Immigration in Congress," 1-2.
[58] Ibid., 6-7.
[59] Ibid., 6.

listed the groups he wished to exclude. Under Hayes' proposal, the provisions of the Chinese Exclusion Act would apply to "Japanese, Koreans, Tartars, Malays, Afghans, East Indians, Lascars, Hindus, and all other persons of the Mongolian or Asiatic race."[60] Should Hayes, who was never one to hide his xenophobia, have genuinely disliked the Syrian-Lebanese or Armenians, he would have listed them alongside the other groups.

In January of 1916, the two California Congressmen joined together in the House Immigration and Naturalization Committee to sponser a resolution against "Hindus and all persons of the Mongolian or yellow race, the Malay or brown race, unless their exclusion be otherwise provided for by existing agreements as to passports, or by treaties, conventions, or agreements that may hereafter be entered into."[61] By combining Hayes failed 1914 amendment with Secretary Wilson's language leaving the 1907 Gentleman's Agreement intact, Hayes and Raker were sacrificing further action against the Japanese in order to implement drastic restrictions of Indian, Mongolian, and Malaysian laborers. The committee voted in favor of including the new language into the bill.[62] They later refined the provision, keeping Hayes' explicit exclusion of "Hindus," but changing the "yellow race," and the "brown race" to persons "who cannot become eligible under existing law, to become citizens of the United States by naturalization."[63] For Burnett, this was the framework likeliest to succeed. By explicitly barring "Hindus," the bill allowed Congressional nativists to show their constituents they were taking the "threat" of Asian immigration seriously. By barring those ineligible to citizenship, the bill became far-reaching without having to specify scores of different ethnicities for exclusion.

[60] Ibid., 7.
[61] Minutes, Committee on Immigration and Naturalization, 64 Congress, Records of the U.S. House of Representatives, RG 233, National Archives, Washington D.C., 8-9.
[62] Ibid., 9.
[63] House Committee on Immigration and Naturalization, *Immigration of Aliens into the United States*, 64th Cong., 1st sess., 1916, H. Rep. 95, 3.

Finally, by building in the exception for those "provided for by existing agreements as to passports, or by existing treaties, conventions, or agreements," the bill avoided further antagonizing the Japanese government by adhering to the status quo.

In the Spring of 1916, the Senate took up Burnett's bill. While the bill would eventually pass in 1917 as Public Law 301, "An Act To regulate the immigration of aliens to, and the residence of aliens in, the United States," anyone who reads the statute has eventually gotten to its provision restricting Asian laborers, the language of which is the work of the Senate. At first, the wording is similar to that of the House's bill but then plummets sharply into an mass of longitudes, latitudes, parallels, and meridians. The law restricted,

> unless otherwise provided for by existing treaties, persons who are natives of islands not possessed by the United States adjacent to the Continent of Asia, situate south of the twentieth parallel latitude north, west of the one hundred and sixtieth meridian of longitude east from Greenwich, and north of the tenth parallel of latitude south, or who are natives of any country, province, or dependency situate on the Continent of Asia west of the one hundred and tenth meridian of longitude east from Greenwich and east of the fiftieth meridian of longitude east from Greenwich and south of the fiftieth parallel of latitude north, except for that portion of said territory situate between the fiftieth and the sixty-fourth meridians of longitude east from Greenwich and the twenty-fourth and thirty-eighth parallels of latitude north, and no alien now in any way excluded from, or prevented from entering, the United States shall be admitted to the United States.[64]

When the Senate Immigration Committee received the House bill, the committee-members consulted with the State and Labor departments "to perfect" amendments to H.R. 10384.[65] Together, they decided to implement the ban on Asian laborers using geographical designations rather than ethnic descriptors like "Hindus" or implicit racial indicators involving eligibility to citizenship. Congress' use of latitudinal and longitudinal lines was a departure from their usual modus operandi. Earlier legislation restricted types of people, such as those with health issues, radical political beliefs, or a lack of funds. Subsequent legislation from the 1920s assigned

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[64] An Act To regulate the immigration of aliens to, and the residence of aliens in, the United States, Public Law 301, § 3, *U.S. Statutes at Large* 39 (1917): 876.
[65] W.B. Wilson to James Phelan, May 22, 1916, quoted in *Cong. Rec.*, 64th Cong., 2d sess., 1916: 253.

countries individual quotas and eventually implemented the "ineligible to citizenship" framework to exclude individuals from Central and East Asia entirely.

When looking at the Senate Immigration Committee's language later that year, Senator James Reed made an acute observation: "Without the map, the language of the bill is meaningless."[66] Luckily, the Immigration Bureau felt similarly and designed a map illustrating the boundary lines of the "Asiatic Barred Zone," with the various exceptions applied to it (See Appendix A).[67] Going through the legislation provision by provision, in conjunction with the Immigration Bureau's map, provides for a better idea of the legislators' intent. The initial provision excepting laborers from those countries whose immigration to the U.S. was regulated by "existing treaties" meant that Chinese immigrants, who were already strictly regulated under the terms of the Angell Treaty of 1880 and the Chinese Exclusion Act that followed it, were unaffected by the barred zone. The next section of the law barred "persons who are natives of islands not possessed by the United States adjacent to the Continent of Asia, situate south of the twentieth parallel latitude north, west of the one hundred and sixtieth meridian of longitude east from Greenwich, and north of the tenth parallel of latitude south." By drawing the barred zone's southernmost border at the tenth parallel south, the legislators divided Australia from the archipelagos to its north and thereby excluded the peoples whom Hayes' would see as the "Malay or brown race."

The next part of the legislation excluded those "who are natives of any country, province, or dependency situate on the Continent of Asia west of the one hundred and tenth meridian of longitude east from Greenwich, and east of the fiftieth meridian of longitude east from

[66] *Cong. Rec.*, 64th Cong., 2d sess., 1916: 159.
[67] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Immigration, "Map Showing Asiatic Zone Prescribed in Section Three of Immigration Act, the Natives of which are Excluded from the United States, with Certain Exceptions," *Immigration Laws* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1922), 45.

Greenwich and south of the fiftieth parallel of latitude north." The one hundred and tenth meridian east, which cut through China to encompass southeastern Asia, served as the eastern border of the Barred Zone. The fiftieth parallel north served as the northernmost boundary line in order to include modern-day Kazakhstan and Mongolia in the Barred Zone. For those living on the "islands not possessed by the United States adjacent to the Continent of Asia," the southernmost border of the zone was the tenth parallel south, while for those on "the Continent of Asia, the southernmost boundary was that of mainland Asia itself.

The fiftieth meridian east constituted the western-most border, running through the Caspian Sea and modern-day Iran and Yemen. In the next part of the act, legislators created an exception along the western portion of the barred zone's boundaries: "except for that portion of said territory situate between the fiftieth and the sixty-fourth meridians of longitude east from Greenwich and the twenty-fourth and thirty-eighth parallels of latitude north." This provision allowed the western border of the zone to skirt the edges of modern day Iran, placing the people of Afghanistan and India inside the barred zone and leaving Turkish, Armenian, "Syrian," and "Persian" laborers free to enter the United States.

In *Between Arab and White,* Gualtieri asks an excellent question – "why though, had Syria fallen outside the Asiatic Barred Zone?"[68] The barred zone was simply the Senate's attempt to create geographical version of the anti-Asian provision in the House's bill excluding "Hindus," and those who "cannot become eligible … to become citizens." For the past few Congresses, the spirit and driving force behind the House Immigration Committee's push to exclude Indians and immigrants ineligible to citizenship had been two xenophobic progressives from California. The answer to Gualtieri's question does not lie solely in the efforts of the 64th Congress, but can be traced back to the actions of Hayes and Raker, who, since 1910 and 1913

[68] Gualtieri, *Between Arab and White,* 67.

respectively, had pushed to restrict "Asian" laborers while building exceptions for the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians into their bills.

Representatives for the House and Senate met for a conference committee to sort out the differences between the two versions of the legislation. There, the two representatives for the lower chamber, Hayes and Burnett, acceded to the Senate's Barred Zone.[69] Democratic Congressional leaders, so as not to alienate voters in the immigrant communities, waited until after the 1916 election had concluded to pass HR 10834 through the House and Senate. Wilson again vetoed Burnett's literacy test, but this time Congress marshaled the votes to override the president and pass the bill into law.[70]

The Literacy Test

The other major feature of HR 10834 was, of course, Burnett's literacy test. To enter the country, an individual had to demonstrate to immigrant inspectors' satisfaction that he or she could read in any recognized language. Burnett built in an exception into the bill, exempting those who suffered religious persecution in their home countries from having to pass the literacy test. Congress had no difficulty admitting that Burnett had designed the exemption specifically to benefit Jewish and Armenian immigrants.[71] During the debate over the exemption, Democratic Congressman James Slayden praised the Armenians as "hav[ing] manifested the possession of qualities which we ought to cultivate." When describing the group, Slayden clearly had the recent events of 1915 in mind:

> They possess a virility and persistency and adhesion to a faith and to the high ideals that we can not encourage too much. The Armenians should not be killed because of religious faith, nor their women subjected to the infamy of being sent to a harem. The torture is more than most people could bear: most religious faiths would break down

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[69] Conference Report (No. 1291) quoted in *Cong. Rec.*, 64th Cong., 2d sess., 1917: 1488.
[70] Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, 192-193.
[71] *Cong. Rec.*, 64th Cong., 1st sess., 1916: 4869, 4873, 4875.

> under a persecution like that … but they have kept the faith and they deserve the exemption. We wrote the bill with these two peoples in mind, the Jews and the Christians.[72]

Similarly, when Slayden declared Jewish immigrants to be "a wonderful and unhappy people," he did so in reference to the intense suffering the group had endured in Russia.[73] It took decades of massacres to get Burnett to that point, but the Alabama Congressman was willing to inject a limited amount of humanitarianism into his bill when the "right" groups were in danger. Ultimately, the final version of HR 10834 exempted immigrants who had suffered religious persecution from having to demonstrate their literacy in order to enter the country.

It is worth noting just how frequently Congress exempted the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians from discriminatory legislation in the 1910s. Hayes introduced bills in the early 1910s to ensure that the two groups would not be excluded alongside those ineligible to citizenship. Starting in 1913, Raker included an exception for "Turkey in Asia" in his legislation. The Asiatic Barred Zone gave wide berth around western Asia. And finally, Burnett had exempted Armenians from having to pass the literacy test in order to reside in the United States. These exceptions, added to bills by some of the leading Congressional nativists, allowed Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians to chart a course forward even as their authors were throwing barriers onto the paths of other immigrant groups.

During the Progressive Era, the courts had made the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians eligible to naturalize. Hayes helped ensure the groups could enter into the country to pursue American citizenship. The question remained, however, as to what kind of life these new U.S. citizens would face after entering into turn-of-the-century American society. The next chapter

[72] Ibid., 4875.
[73] Ibid.

examines the ways in which progressives like Rowell and Blackwell leveraged their connections to try to smooth the immigrants’ paths socially and economically.

CHAPTER 6

CONSTRUCTING SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE

A Helping Hand

For the first generation of Syrian-Lebanese and Armenian immigrants, it took a tremendous amount of determination and sheer grit to make the journey to the United States and adjust to life in a new country. Many were fleeing the aftermath of massacres, revolutions, and a World War. When the immigrants arrived in the United States, Americans often reacted to the two groups with either curiosity or open hostility. Yet several self-identified progressives consistently went out of their way to improve the immigrants' welfare beyond just advocating for their eligibility to naturalize. As the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians worked to establish themselves in America, men and women in the Rowell and Blackwell families tried to alleviate the social and economic problems these two groups faced.

A Healing Touch

The Seropian family was the first Armenian family to settle in Fresno.[1] At school, George Seropian's classmates learned that one of the surefire ways of antagonizing the Armenian children was to call them "Turks." Seropian complained to the principal of his school, saying that his classmates were targeting the Armenian students due to their clothing, skin color, and difficulty learning English. The principal, however, failed to intervene.[2] Interviewed late in life by Nectar Davidian, Seropian described what happened next. The next time his schoolmates surrounded an Armenian student and taunted him as a "Turk," George and his brother John Seropian, six other boys, "and, he added chuckling, Suzie Markarian" came barreling in and

[1] Nectar Davidian, *The Seropians, First Armenian Settlers in Fresno County, California* (Berkeley: NP, 1965), iii, 2.
[2] Ibid., 5.

pummeled the offenders in the schoolyard. According to Seropian, he and his friends went into the fight knowing that they might be expelled.[3] The school did not punish the Armenian students, however, due to the actions of Dr. Chester A. Rowell.[4] Dr. Rowell was uncle to Chester H. Rowell, and was well respected throughout Fresno for his work as a physician and for his efforts with the *Republican*, of which he was majority shareholder.[5] A political reformer active in California politics since the 1880s, Dr. Rowell served for several years in the state senate and as Fresno's mayor.[6] Dr. Rowell talked to the school's principal, who then lectured the school on the importance of treating the Armenians with respect.[7]

Unfortunately, among Fresno's native-born community, hostility against the Armenians was not limited exclusively to schoolchildren. Chester H. Rowell knew first-hand that individuals in Fresno often refused to sell real estate to both the Armenians and the Japanese. Rowell wrote that his own neighbor "purchased the three lots adjoining his house at a price higher than he thought they were worth, to prevent a threatened sale to an Armenian, and who stood ready immediately to resell them without profit, or even at a loss, to any person not an Armenian." "And yet," he added sadly, "the Armenians are of our own race, and our own

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[3] Toros B. Khungian, "Origins and Development of the Fresno Armenian Community to the 1918 Year," *Armenian Review*, XXXI, No. 2-122 (Feb. 1979): 163.
[4] Davidian, *The Seropians*, 5-6.
[5] Dr. Chester A. Rowell began publishing the *Fresno Republican* in 1878; his nephew Chester H. Rowell took over its editorship in 1898. As the *San Francisco Daily Times* once noted, there was a great deal of mix-ups regarding the two men given the similarity between their names. O'Day, "Chester H. Rowell," *San Francisco Daily Times*, January 7, 1911.
[6] Everett, *Progressive Humanist*, 154-159.
[7] George Seropian listed the Armenian participants in the fight as he and his brother John, Harry, Krikor, and Joseph Arakelian, Haig Azhderian, and Henry, Sumpad, and Suzie Markarian. The Seropian, Arakelian, Azhderian, and Markarian families were among the very Armenians to come to Fresno, arriving in the early 1880s. Seropian did not provide a date for the fight but it likely took place sometime in the 1880s. The Seropians, Arakelians, and Markarians each became involved in the fruit industry, with Kirkor Arakelian and Henry Markarian, in particular, having hugely successful careers. See George Seropian quoted in Davidian, *The Seropians*, 4-5; T.B. Khungian, "Fresno's Armenian Community," *Fresno Morning Republican*, March 26, 1905.

religion, and they contain among them some of the finest personalities to be found anywhere."[8] By the 1920s, property covenants against Armenian, Japanese, Chinese, and Indian immigrants were becoming increasingly prevalent in Fresno.[9]

The immigrants' Christian heritage was no guarantee that native-born citizens would treat the Syrian-Lebanese or Armenians well, even in their places of worship. Reaction to the immigrants varied by church. In Columbia, South Carolina, the Syrian-Lebanese were "welcomed warmly" by Trinity Episcopal Church; a women's group formed by the immigrants always had the most popular table at fundraising events after they introduced baklava and other types of food to the congregation.[10] In contrast, at the Fresno Congregationalist Church, the ushers segregated the Armenian members on the left side of the congregation and refused to let them use bibles and hymnals to follow along with the service. Upset about the situation, the Armenians forced the issue by ignoring the ushers and sitting in the front row of the right side of the congregation. When the reverend, J.H. Collins, asked the Armenian parishioners to follow the ushers' orders, a Mr. Ashdarian responded that he had "found no place in the bible where I am told to obey ushers." Collins ordered them to leave the building and struck their names from the church rolls.[11]

The Armenians' expulsion from the church in Fresno made it into several national presses. In May and June of 1894, the *Chicago Advance*, the *New York Independent*, the *New York Outlook*, and the *Boston Congregationalist* wrote editorials supporting the Armenians.

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[8] Chester H. Rowell to K.K. Kawakami, December 11, 1914, Chester H. Rowell Papers, BANC MSS C-B 401, Box 2, Folder "1914, Nov.-Dec.," The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.
[9] Berge Bulbulian, *The Fresno Armenians* (Fresno: Press at California State University, Fresno, 2000), 116-117.
[10] Paula Maria Stathakis, *Almost White: Greek and Lebanese-Syrian Immigrants in North and South Carolina, 1900-1940* (Dissertation, University of South Carolina, 1996), 202.
[11] Ashdarian quoted in "Astounding Persecution of Armenian Christians in California," Berge Bulbulian Papers, Box 2, Folder "2 of 3," Sanoian Special Collections Library, California State University, Fresno.

Meanwhile in Fresno, over forty businessmen signed a statement defending the Armenians' character:

> We, the undersigned business men of Fresno, Cal. do hereby state that we have a general knowledge of all the Armenians of the city and county of Fresno and a particular acquaintance with many of them; that we have dealt with them in business, and met them as neighbors and associates; and we have found them to be honest, sober, industrious, saving and self-sustaining, and to be good and worthy citizens whose example is beneficial to the morals of our community.

Below the statement, the first and seventh signatories listed on the document were Dr. Rowell and his employee, J.W. Short, the editor of the *Fresno Republican* in the 1890s.[12] Eventually the other Protestant churches in Fresno expressed their willingness for the Armenians to join their churches while Congregationalist officials in California censured Collins.[13]

Fresno's Armenian population possessed many traits that a political reformer like Dr. Rowell would have appreciated. For example, not only were members of the Seropian family businessmen, but in 1894 they received wide-spread acclaim when their packinghouse business, Seropian Brothers, challenged the Southern Pacific Rail Company's shipping monopoly. After the railroad company increased their rates, the Armenians decided to send shipments of fruit from Fresno to San Francisco using mule-drawn wagons instead. The San Francisco *Examiner* referred to the Seropian brothers' company as "enterprising anti-monopolist shippers," while many of the farmers and merchants of Fresno County spoke favorably of the Southern Pacific.[14] At one stop in San Jose, over three hundred people gathered to see the mule team.[15] While the Armenians' venture no doubt piqued the interest of Fresno's cadre of reformers, Dr. Rowell was

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[12] Testimonial from Citizens of Fresno County, "Astounding Persecution of Armenian Christians in California," Berge Bulbulian Papers, Box 2, Folder "2 of 3," Sanoian Special Collections Library, California State University, Fresno.
[13] "Astounding Persecution of Armenian Christians in California," Berge Bulbulian Papers, Box 2, Folder "2 of 3," Sanoian Special Collections Library, California State University, Fresno.
[14] "A Message from Enterprising Anti-Monopolist Shippers," *The Examiner*, November 17, 1894; "The Shippers' Revolt," *The Examiner*, November 18, 1894.
[15] "Freighter Campbell Says he is Not Going into Business," *The Examiner*, November 23, 1894.

the kind of figure whose instinct was to help everyone around him, including the city's Asian and Latino populations.

The various immigrant communities in and around Fresno were emotionally indebted to Rowell, who often treated his indigent patients pro bono and used his own money to pay for their prescriptions. Short, the *Fresno Republican* editor who had signed the statement defending the Armenian population, described the first time he went to the physician's office. Short found Dr. Rowell deep in an argument with an individual named Manuel, an immigrant with a wife and young children. When Manuel kept trying to pay the doctor for the services that he had rendered the family, Rowell insisted that his patient instead use the money to buy warm winter clothes for his wife and children. Rowell ended the disagreement by turning and leaving the room, whereupon his colleague from the *Republican* noted that the physician had started to cry.[16]

When Dr. Rowell died in 1912, Fresno's Armenian community held their own memorial service for him, packing Einstein Hall to capacity.[17] Part of the reason why so many Armenians mourned Dr. Rowell's death was that he supported the immigrants on their own terms. For example, Abraham Seklemian wrote that Dr. Rowell felt it was important for the group to have an Armenian language newspaper in Fresno. According to Seklemian, Dr. Rowell "worked incessantly" for their interests and, when he learned of the project to start *Asbarez*, "he expressed great joy and promised to do all he could do to help out."[18] From 1909 to 1915, the writers and editors of Asbarez worked for free because their money from subscriptions did not cover the expense of producing the newspaper. A sociologist writing in the *Fresno Republican* reported that "the *Asbarez* staff declare that during this time [1909-1915] the paper was materially

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[16] John W. Short quoted in Everett, *Pragmatic Humanist*, 156.
[17] "Members of Armenian Colony Hold Memorial for Dr. Rowell," *Fresno Morning Republican*, June 3, 1912.
[18] Seklemian, "The Founding Years of the 'Asbarez' Newspaper" quoted in "How it All Began: A First Person Perspective from the Founders of Asbarez," *Asbarez*, August 14, 2008.

assisted by the *Republican*" and that "without this assistance … it would not have been possible to launch or continue the enterprise."[19] After Rowell's death, the Armenians raised four hundred dollars to purchase a silver urn to hold the doctor's ashes.[20] They also began raising funds for Haig Patigian, a well-known Armenian sculptor, to create a statue of Dr. Rowell, which cost fifteen thousand dollars.[21] The statue depicts Rowell sitting benevolently by a patient's bedside and still stands in Courthouse Park in downtown Fresno.[22].

The Armenian community was just one of the city's many ethnic groups who mourned Dr. Rowell's death. Fresno's Portuguese, Serbian, Chinese, and Armenian communities passed resolutions in his honor.[23] Thousands of individuals gathered together in Courthouse Park, where, among the flowers donated by the city trustees and the Fresno Chamber of Commerce rested a harp from the Nishkian brothers, a star and crescent from the Japanese Buddhist church, and a wreath from the Chinese Merchants Association.[24] Chester H. Rowell described the large crowd as "representative of cosmopolitan Fresno" and noted that no other city event would draw such a various mass of people together.[25] The diversity of those mourning the physician's death is a testament to the pluralistic humanitarianism with which the doctor lived his life. As Arpatat Setrakian said, the strongest "virtue that I had seen in Dr. Rowell … was his love for all of us,

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[19] Wilson D. Wallis, "Fresno Nationalities; A Study---Armenians," *Fresno Morning Republican*, July 6, 1919.
[20] Khungian, "Origins and Development of the Fresno Armenian Community to the 1918 Year," 162.
[21] "People of Fresno Render Final Tribute to Memory of Doctor Chester Rowell, *Fresno Morning Republican*, May 27, 1912; "Armenian Residents to Honor Dr. Rowell," *Fresno Morning Republican*, June 2, 1912.
[22] "Chester Rowell Memorial 1914 – Haig Patigian," Historical Fresno County Courthouse Park Walking Tour, http://www.gofresnocounty.com/Courthouse/Page2.asp (accessed November 9, 2017).
[23] "Many Resolutions by Organizations in his Memory," *Fresno Morning Republican*, May 27, 1912.
[24] "People of Fresno Render Final Tribute to Memory of Doctor Chester Rowell, *Fresno Morning Republican*, May 27, 1912.
[25] Rowell, "Fresno's Tribute," *Fresno Morning Republican*, May 27, 1912.

and I do not mean for Armenians alone. He loved everyone because he thought as the Good Samaritan that it was his duty to attend everyone."[26]

A Highbrow Approach

After Dr. Rowell's death, his nephew and namesake assumed ownership of the *Fresno Republican*. On May 28, 1912, Chester H. Rowell used his uncle's funeral to editorialize that the native-born population needed to unite with the city's immigrant communities if Fresno was to become a singular functioning unit. In the editorial, one of the groups Rowell singled out for praise were the Armenians,

> one of the most wonderful and romantic peoples in the world – a people of our own race and religion …. One of the brightest and most capable races in the world, with a history of civilization and learning that was already thousands of years old when the ancestors of most of us were skin-clad savages – and most of us know of them nothing more than that some of their ways are not as our ways, and so we assume they must be worse ways…. One man had known them all, had been nearer to the hearts of the Armenians than any Armenian and more familiar to 'Russiantown' than any of its own people. That man is gone. If the heritage of his spirit can bring this community to a wider sympathy and understanding, and a truer union, it will be the greatest boon that could have been conferred on the community.[27]

Above all else, Rowell asked his readers to follow his uncle's example, "find[ing] the common ground of love" in the face of racial, religious, and class conflicts.[28]

Neither the doctor's example nor the editor's plea swayed the masses, for the types of animosities that Dr. Rowell feared continued to plague the city for decades. In 1930, Richard Tracy LaPiere of Stanford University surveyed over 400 residents of Fresno County to determine their attitude towards the Armenian population. LaPiere reported that over forty percent of the respondents did not want the Armenians to attend their churches, over fifty percent did not want

[26] Arpatat Setrakian quoted in "Members of Armenian Colony Hold Memorial for Dr. Rowell," *Fresno Morning Republican*, June 3, 1912.
[27] Chester H. Rowell, "A Lesson for Fresno," *Fresno Morning Republican*, May 28, 1912.
[28] Chester H. Rowell, "Fresno's Tribute," *Fresno Morning Republican*, May 27, 1912.

them as neighbors or as fellow citizens, and over ninety percent did not want a member of the group to marry one of their family members.[29] Such prejudice against the immigrant group infuriated Rowell.

To combat Fresno's animosity against the immigrants, Rowell asked authors to write in-depth stories about the city's Armenian community for the *Republican*. He published their full accounts, which often spanned several pages of the day's paper. The first essayist Rowell brought in was Toros B. Khungian, a writer for *Asbarez*.[30] Khungian began his 1905 article by listing many of the first Armenian families to settle in Fresno, such as the Seropians, the Markarians, and the Arkelians, who, Khungian stated, all arrived between 1881-1883.[31] Fresno was a rather small town at the time; between 1880 and 1900, the population of the city of Fresno grew from 1,112 individuals to 12,470.[32] By noting that the Seropians had set up shop on Mariposa Street as early as 1881, the author was implicitly acknowledging that there were Armenian families who had lived in Fresno for longer than many native-born citizens had. Khungian's references to the Markarian and Arkelian families in the first few paragraphs of the article was shrewd for another reason, for by 1905 Krikor Arakelian and Henry Markarian were becoming extremely prominent fruit producers in California's raisin, fig, and melon industries.[33]

Khungian also sought to emphasize the Armenians' heritage. He stressed how the Armenians created stunning architecture before the Greeks built their wonders, how their military bested Roman generals like "Lucullus, Pompey, and Croessus," and how their people

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[29] Matthew Garcia, "The Importance of Being Asian: Growers, the United Farm Workers, and the Rise of Colorblindness," in *Racial Formation in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Daniiel Martinez HoSang, Oneka LaBennett, and Laura Pulido (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 99.
[30] Seklemian, "The Founding Years of the 'Asbarez' Newspaper," quoted in "How it All Began: A First Person Perspective from the Founders of Asbarez," *Asbarez*, August 14, 2008.
[31] T.B. Khungian, "Fresno's Armenian Community," *Fresno Morning Republican*, March 26, 1905.
[32] *Statistical Report of the California State Board of Agriculture for the Year 1920* (Sacramento: California State Printing Office, 1921), 47.
[33] Mirak, Torn Between Two Lands, 120-121.

adopted Christianity well before Constantine's edicts. Khungian wrote that, in the present, that almost all the Armenians in Fresno were literate, sober, economical, and patriotic. Finally, the author quoted Theodore Roosevelt on the importance of one's "love of wife and child, love of home and country," and stated that the Armenians' home life held up to the president's standard.[34]

Throughout the next decade and a half, Rowell periodically published articles in support of Fresno's Armenians. In 1909, he wrote several editorials in defense of the groups' Whiteness. In 1912, his uncle's funeral inspired Rowell to advocate on the immigrant community's behalf. The lesson he tried to impart through the *Fresno Republican* apparently failed to take hold with the public, because in June of 1919 the editor brought in another writer, this time a history and sociology instructor at Fresno Junior College named Wilson Wallis, to educate his readers about the city's immigrant groups.[35]

Wallis' first article focused on the history of Armenia and emphasized the country's Christian heritage.[36] A week later, he followed his first effort with another essay, which spanned almost two full pages of the paper and centered on the Armenian community in the United States. Wallis explained the current conditions the Armenians faced in Asia Minor in an attempt to build his readers' sympathy for the group. He provided several statistics about the group, estimating that over 55,000 individuals had immigrated to the United States over the past twenty years and that New York City, Fresno, Worchester, and Boston possessed the largest Armenian communities. Like Khungian before him, Wallis honed in on the immigrants' contributions to Fresno. He laid out the achievements of the Seropian, Markarian, and Arkelian families and

[34] Khungian, "Fresno's Armenian Community," *Fresno Morning Republican*, March 26, 1905.
[35] *Register, 1920-21, With Announcements for 1921-22, Volume I* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1921), 42.
[36] Wilson D. Wallis, "Armenia; The Country and People, *Fresno Morning Republican*, June 29, 1919.

provided a list of all the Armenian-owned businesses in the city. According to Wallis, these included two factories, three jewelry or watch-making businesses, four drug stores, five clothing stores, five dentists' offices, six doctors' offices, seven law practices, seven restaurants, eight fruit stores, fourteen barbershops, sixteen groceries, twenty tailors, and fifteen shoe stores. Finally, Wallis explored the contributions of *Asbarez*, *Siswan*, and *Nor Giank*, which were some of the leading Armenian-language publications in the city.[37]

On July 13, 1919, Wallis' published his third article in as many weeks about the Armenians. Wallis' opening lines likely attracted his readers' attention far more quickly than anything else he had written previously:

> The Armenian is undoubtedly, and beyond parallel, the most highly educated and cultured element in the community…. Walk down any street in Fresno and collect the first twenty Armenians and the first twenty Americans of native birth that you meet. The average knowledge of world affairs, of European politics, of art, of history, of the course and development of civilization, of the growth and doctrines of Christianity – in all of these phases the average Armenian is a much better informed man than is the average American. The proportion of Armenians is twenty times that of native born Americans who can tell you the origin of the church to which he adheres, the origin of his alphabet, the conditions under which Christianity was brought to his people, the history of his own people, and the history of other peoples.

Wallis continued on, saying that several Armenians understood English better than native-born Americans and that the group had a higher rate of literacy than all other immigrants except those from Scandinavia, Britain, and the British colonies. The author eventually adopted a less confrontational tone, listing the distinguished Armenian engineers, artists, and scholars who had come through Fresno. Finally, Wallis finished the article by detailing the Armenians' patriotic, religious, and educational institutions in Fresno to demonstrate the points of common emphasis between the immigrants and the city's native-born population.[38]

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[37] Wilson D. Wallis, "Fresno Nationalities -- A Study, Armenians," *Fresno Morning Republican*, July 6, 1919.
[38] Wilson D. Wallis, "Fresno Nationalities --- A Study, Armenians (Part II)," *Fresno Morning Republican*, July 13, 1919.

In an editorial the next day, Rowell did not distance himself from Wallis' opinions, but instead quoted the paragraph contrasting the average American and the average Armenian immigrant. Rowell thought Wallis' passage needed to be reiterated, he said, "to 'rub it in,' startlingly, if possible; offensively, perhaps."[39] The *Republican* editor, who was once described as the "highest high brow in California politics," framed social discrimination as a phenomena tied to education and culture.[40] "A sense of scornful superiority to the Armenians," he wrote, "is perhaps the commonest prejudice of that part of our American population whose personal qualifications least entitle them to it." "You do not find any contempt of Armenians," Rowell added, "among our most cultivated Americans."[41] Ironically, the *Fresno Republican* editor framed the split in views towards the Armenians in roughly the same way as Judge Smith had during the racial prerequisite cases: "experts" like Wallis and Rowell saw the immigrants as citizens, contrary to the disapprobation felt by the "common man."

Rowell, in his correspondence with his family and with professional contacts, had previously articulated this "highbrow" understanding of social prejudice. In 1914, he was in contact with the manager of the *Pacific Press,* K.K. Kawakami. Kawakami had recently purchased a home in the San Francisco area, but his future neighbors were trying to block the sale. Rowell told Kawakami that he was familiar with this type of agitation, having witnessed it firsthand. Rowell's brother had antagonized his neighbors in Berkeley when he sold his house to George Shima, a prominent Japanese businessman known colloquially in California as the "Potato King." "The only person who would have any personal objection to you as an

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[39] Chester H. Rowell, "Armenian Culture," *Fresno Morning Republican*, July 14, 1919.
[40] O'Day, "Chester H. Rowell," *San Francisco Daily Times*, January 7, 1911.
[41] Rowell, "Armenian Culture," *Fresno Morning Republican*, July 14, 1919.

individual," Rowell wrote, "are persons who are themselves so far socially inferior to you that you would have the same objections, must better justified, to them."[42]

Back in the 1890s, Rowell had spent several years studying in Germany, during which time he had frequent opportunities to ponder the nature of racism. Curious about the widespread anti-Semitism in the country, he had attended a political meeting held in support of Hermann Ahlwardt, one of the founders of the Antisemitische Volkspartei (the Anti-Semitic People's Party). Rowell, writing to his family about the experience, compared the "anti-Semitic craze in Germany" to the '"know nothing' craze in America … except that it is more widespread than 'know-nothingism" ever was in America." Rowell said he was opposed to anti-Semitism, and had tried to understand it by talking with "intelligent men who sympathize with it, but I cannot." He left the political meeting even more opposed to Germany's anti-Semites than he was going into it, partly because the speaker did not "speak literary German" and relied on "bad jokes and blind hatred." The meeting did provide Rowell with some insight into the nature of racial prejudice. He told his sister Cora that he did not understand German anti-Semitism just as the Germans did not understand racism in America against African Americans. Rowell noted that "it only shows that race questions are a question of standpoint and the prejudice of narrow surroundings, but are never to be justified from an outside view."[43] As an outsider in Europe, he realized the myopic nature of racism, grasping that such prejudice could not be justified objectively. As an influential California powerbroker in the 1910s, however, Rowell applied the lesson he had learned in Germany selectively.

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[42] Rowell to Kawakami, December 11, 1914, December 11, 1914, Chester H. Rowell Papers, BANC MSS C-B 401, Box 2, Folder "1914, Nov.-Dec.," The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.
[43] Chester H. Rowell to Maria Sanford Rowell, December 19, 1892, Chester Harvey Rowell Papers, Box 3, Folder "1885, 1890, 1892," Sanoian Special Collections Library, California State University, Fresno.

Rowell's editorials and letters make clear that he felt that social prejudice against individual members of the Japanese and Armenian communities was a product of less-cultured minds than his own. When it came to the Armenians, who fell within the boundaries of his social, political, and economic preferences, he advocated on the group's behalf time and time again. When it came to Japanese immigrants, who as a whole irritated many of his socio-economic biases, Rowell used the "average American's" nativism to justify his own attitude towards excluding Asians from California. Rowell welcomed the presence of individuals like Shima or Kawakami, but he feared the idea of a sizable Japanese population in California. As he told Kawakami,

> You can readily see how the very existence of such a prejudice would soon produce an almost intolerable caste system in this country if we had any very large continuous immigration of Japanese. It is hard enough to teach our people to treat with just consideration even the Japanese who are here, though these are few in numbers and are doing no harm to anybody. If we had enough Japanese to present a real problem, it is a problem which our people would refuse to deal with on any terms of justice, and no amount of leadership could induce them to do so. That is the reason why I have always taken the position, in which I think that you thoroughly agree with me, that the presence of any large Japanese population here is decidedly to be discouraged.[44]

His time in Germany forced Rowell to grapple with the myopic nature of racial prejudice. His uncle's funeral had impressed upon him the knowledge that diverse groups of people could and should come together as one. Ironically, Rowell tried to impart those ideals on his "less-cultured" readers on behalf of the Armenians, even as he himself failed to apply such lessons towards the Japanese.

An Ode to Armenia

Across the country, another progressive-minded editor was struggling with how she could lessen the xenophobia and hostility Armenian immigrants faced from America's populace. Alice

[44] Rowell to Kawakami, December 11, 1914, December 11, 1914, Chester H. Rowell Papers, BANC MSS C-B 401, Box 2, Folder "1914, Nov.-Dec.," The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

Stone Blackwell was the daughter of two prominent Boston suffragists and anti-slavery advocates, Lucy Stone and her husband, Henry Blackwell. In 1870, her parents had started the *Women's Journal*, a pro-suffrage weekly newspaper. Blackwell grew up working on the paper and, when her mother died in 1893, she became its editor.[45]

Around the time of her mother's death, Blackwell had become close with Ohannes Chatschumian, an Armenian theological student studying at Harvard. Chatshcumian was an intellectual with a deep appreciation of Armenia's history and traditions. He loved to sit with his new American friends to discuss the songs, literature, folklore, and spiritual beliefs of the Armenian people.[46] After Blackwell and Chatschumian organized the Friends of Armenia society, the two hosted gatherings, usually at Blackwell's house, where members of the immigrant community gathered to discuss Armenian politics, religion, and culture. One of the first social events Blackwell led took place in 1894, when she had the idea of inviting a dozen of Chatschumian's Armenian friends to her house in Boston. Blackwell, a passionate advocate of women and ethnic minority groups, was an introvert at heart, and nervous about hosting so many people while her more gregarious father was out of town.[47] Despite her fears, the event turned out fine; her guests performed several Armenian songs, Chatschumian gave a lecture about Orthodox Christianity, and Blackwell's only mistake was that she ordered too many sandwiches from the caterer.[48]

During the years they spent together, Chatschumian introduced Blackwell to a love of Armenian poetry, which he translated into English and she set to verse. The first poem they

[45] Balakian, *The Burning Tigris*, 94.
[46] Angelo Hall to Isabel C. Barrows, April 10, 1903, Ohannes Chatschumian Folder, Reel 22, Blackwell Family Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
[47] Alice Stone Blackwell to Isabel Barrows, June 17, 1894, Barrows Family Papers, MS Am 1807.1, Folder 2, The Houghton Library, Harvard.
[48] Alice Stone Blackwell to Henry Blackwell, June 27, 1894, Folder "Blackwell, Henry, B., June-July 1894," Reel 4, Blackwell Family Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.

recreated in English together was the "Tears of Araxes."[49] In 1895, Chatschumian moved to Germany to continue his studies at the University of Leipzig. In his absence, Blackwell consoled herself by continuing her work with Armenian poetry and keeping up a lively correspondence with members of the immigrant community.[50] Then, in 1896, Chatschumian fell deathly ill with consumption. Blackwell had been en route to Europe to see Chatschumian, but she did not make it to Germany before he died.[51] She confessed his death left her feeling both anguished and perversely relieved. Chatschumian had been talking about travelling to Turkey or Russia to advocate for his people and Blackwell assumed that the outspoken young man would be arrested, tortured, and executed.[52]

Soldiering onwards despite Chatschumian's death, Blackwell continued her work compiling Armenian poems. Leaders in the Armenian communities in Boston, Minneapolis, Washington D.C., and London saw value in Blackwell's efforts and provided invaluable help translating the poems, many of which were hundreds of years old.[53] It was difficult, time-consuming work. Blackwell noted that each "translation in verse has been made from a literal translation in prose, furnished to me in French or English by my Armenian friends," some of whom were naturally "hampered by an imperfect knowledge" of both ancient Armenian and English.[54] In total, she set sixty poems to verse, which she published as an anthology in 1896 as *Armenian Poems*. According to Blackwell, *Armenian Poems* served two important purposes. Sympathy for the Armenians, she wrote, would be "deepened by an acquaintance with the

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[49] Alice Stone Blackwell, "Some Reminisces," *The New Armenia* 5, No. 2 (February 1918): 21.
[50] Alice Stone Blackwell to Kitty Berry, July 28, 1895, Folder "Berry, Kitty, 1895," Reel 7, Blackwell Family Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.
[51] Balakian, *The Burning Tigris*, 100.
[52] Alice Stone Blackwell to Isabel Barrows, Undated Letter, Barrows Family Papers, MS Am 1807.1, Folder 5, The Houghton Library, Harvard.
[53] For more on the relationship between Blackwell and her translators, see Lou Ann Matossian, "Politics in Translation: The Letters of Alice Stone Blackwell and Bedros Arakel Keljik, 1894-1898," *Ararat* 40, No. 2 (Spring 1999): 25-31.
[54] Alice Stone Blackwell, ed. *Armenian Poetry* (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1896), *ii*.

temper and genius of the people, as shown by their poetry."[55] Secondly, any profits from the work were to go to the Armenian Relief Fund, part of a humanitarian effort established in the 1890s to help Armenians in Turkey.[56]

Several publications gave the anthology favorable reviews. A columnist for *The Congregationalist* wrote that the verses "give us a very high opinion of the literary capacity of the race which produced them."[57] The assessment from the *New York Evening Post* was even more effusive. The poems, rendered into "fluent and melodious verse" by Blackwell,

> reflect in vivid manner the idealistic temper of a race too generally known for its practical qualities alone. The treatment of their dominant motives, devotion to country, and love of nature, reveals the poetic genius of the nation as one of passionate intensity of purpose and loftiness of soul, together with tenderness of feeling and delicacy of fancy.[58]

The praise that *Armenian Poems* brought to the Armenian people as a whole illustrates why Blackwell and her translators spent so much effort on the project.

The drawback of the anthology was that readers would only see the poems if they went out and purchased the work. In order to ensure the poems – and the Armenian people – stayed visible to as much of the American public as possible, Blackwell had various newspapers, including the *Stratford Journal*, the *New York Evening Post*, the *New Orleans Times-Democrat* (and of course, the *Women's Journal*) publish individual poems periodically.[59] She also developed the idea of sending out English translations of Armenian hymns written in the tenth and eleventh centuries. Blackwell requested that papers include the birth and death dates of the hymns' authors alongside requests to donate to the Armenian Relief Fund. "Thus," Blackwell

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[55] Ibid., *i*.
[56] "Lyric Armenia," *New York Evening Post*, December 9, 1916."
[57] "Literature," *The Congregationalist*, April 16, 1896.
[58] "Lyric Armenia," *New York Evening Post*, December 9, 1916. Blackwell published two editions of *Armenian Poems*, the first in 1896 at the end of the Hamidian Massacres and the second in 1916 in the midst of the Armenian Genocide.
[59] Armenia: Poems Translated by Alice Stone Blackwell, Armenia Subject File, Reel 22, Blackwell Family Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.

wrote, "we may kill two birds with one stone – raise some money for the Armenian Relief Fund and show people for how many centuries the Armenians have been Christians."[60]

Like Rowell, Blackwell was well aware that many native-born Americans harbored dislike of the Armenians and other immigrants. In 1894, news of the Armenians' expulsion from the Fresno Congregationalist Church reached all the way to Boston, where she and Chatschumian discussed the matter at length.[61] Whenever newspaper columnists disparaged the groups, she would send detailed letters to the editor of the offending paper countering their charges. In 1893, Blackwell described how infuriated she was to read a letter to the editor in the *Boston Daily Advertiser* that implied the Armenians "crafty and rebellious spirit" justified the Turkish government's treatment of the group. "I am going to write a letter to the *Advertiser*," she stated to a close family friend, "but it is necessary to wait and cool off, or I shall write a letter they won't print."[62]

The note Blackwell wrote in 1893 contrasts strongly to Rowell's 1919 editorial, wherein the Fresno editor told his readers their nativism was a product of their own lack of cultural sophistication. Blackwell's self-censorship illustrates the power differential between Rowell, a man who had reached the apex of his career in California politics, and Blackwell, a thirty-six year old woman, who, in 1893, was still in the early stages of making her mark on the world. Blackwell's moment of self-awareness reflects well on her general understanding as to which tactics were likeliest to yield results. Rowell brought in an academic to testify about the Armenians' history and culture. Grasping the principal of "show, don't tell," Blackwell used

[60] Alice Stone Blackwell to Ohannes Chatschumian, February 9, 1896, Barrows Family Papers, MS Am 1807.1, Folder 1, The Houghton Library, Harvard.
[61] Blackwell was relieved that other Protestant churches in Fresno had opened their doors to the Armenians, whereas Chatschumian felt that the immigrants should never attend any Protestant church. Alice Stone Blackwell to Isabel Barrows, June 12, 1894, Barrows Family Papers, MS Am 1807.1, Folder 2, The Houghton Library, Harvard.
[62] Alice Stone Blackwell to Isabel Barrows, September 8, 1893, Barrows Family Papers, MS Am 1807.1, Folder 1, The Houghton Library, Harvard.

hymns and poems to let readers glimpse the Armenians' history and culture for themselves. Both strategies – his use of firsthand testimony and her employment of high culture – sought to influence social perceptions of the Armenians by placing "highbrow" views in pedestrian places.

Economic and Social Advancement

Beyond defending the immigrants on an intellectual level, Blackwell devoted herself to helping the material needs of Armenians fleeing the Ottoman Empire. Amidst the Hamidian Massacres in the mid-1890s, thousands of individuals left Anatolia, including a group of 400 Armenians who arrived at Ellis Island. Immigration officials immediately detained the group, telling them it was likely they would have to go back to Turkey. The organization Blackwell had founded with Chatschumian, the United Friends of Armenia, began to take action. M.H. Gulesian, a wealthy Armenian factory-owner and the secretary of the group, travelled to New York to confer with the authorities at Ellis Island. Gulesian also tried to reassure the distraught Armenians they would not, in fact, have to return back to Turkey, speaking to the group through the iron fence that enclosed them.[63]

Detained immigrants typically went before the Board of Special Inquiry at Ellis Island to learn their fates. As Marian Smith noted, "the Board of Special Inquiry usually admitted the person if someone could post bond or one of the immigrant aid societies would take responsibility for the alien." "Those denied admission by the Board," she added, "were deported at the expense of the transportation company that brought the alien to the port."[64] Gulesian

[63] M.H. Gulesian, "The Armenian Refugees" (1897), in *The Armenian Massacres, 1894-1896: U.S. Media Testimony*, ed., Arman J. Kirakossian (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2004), 236-237.
[64] Marian Smith, "History of the INS," https://www.uscitizenship.info/ins-usimmigration-insoverview.html (accessed November 1, 2017).

began to suspect that officials wanted to reject the immigrants to discourage other steamship companies from bringing refugees to the United States.[65]

Nonetheless, the United Friends of Armenia and other organizations began raising money to pay off the Armenians' bonds, which cost one hundred dollars per individual. The Blackwells agreed to open their home in Dorchester, Massachussets for many of the Armenians, while a Boston chapter of the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) also agreed to help take care of part of the group. Immigration officials sent forty-two individuals to the Blackwells and forty-seven to the WCTU, far more than either entity could initially house. While the Blackwells took in those they could, Gulesian solved the problem by opening up a floor of his factory on 16 Waltham Street for the remaining individuals, who were largely men.[66]

Blackwell and her colleagues did what they could to make the factory into a livable home for the months the Armenians stayed there. They put up flags and buntings in Armenian and American colors, while Gulesian split the factory floor into a sleeping area and living area and rented rooms in nearby buildings to provide the group with a kitchen, a dining room, and a storeroom. Boston's community donated clothing and bedding for the immigrants and the WCTU paid for their food. As Ellis Island continued to send small contingents of Armenian immigrants to Boston, Blackwell and other members of the Untied Friends of Armenia were there to greet them and bring them to Waltham Street, where a warm breakfast always awaited. Gulesian writes that Blackwell and her mentor, Isabelle Barrows, took on the brunt of helping the large group of Armenians alongside two additional women from the WCTU. With the immigrants' most pressing needs fulfilled, Gulesian asked several women to join him in teaching the Armenians English and introducing them to the nuances of American customs. According to

[65] Guleisan, "The Armenian Refugees," 238.
[66] Ibid., 238-239.

the Gulesian, they held four or five classes each morning while many of the immigrants also attended the evening school nearby.[67]

The next step involved helping the immigrants find employment. Over the years, the Blackwells hired several Armenian immigrants as cooks, coachmen, and handymen.[68] One of these individuals, Haroutune Heghinian, was absolutely distraught over the fate of his family during the Hamidian Massacres.[69] In July of 1896, his widowed mother was able to secure passage to the United States, but the authorities at Ellis Island barred her from entering due to her trachoma. One of the doctors at the immigration station alerted Heghinian that his mother was likely to be deported on the next steamer out of Ellis Island. According to Blackwell, "Haroutune turned as pale as wax" and told her that "it would be more merciful to kill her than to send her back." Heghinian set off for New York with a letter of introduction from Blackwell and her offer to pay his mother's bond. Blackwell postponed the vacation she had been planning and travelled to the immigration station in Boston to see if they could better explain the situation to her.[70] Her father, Henry Blackwell, took the first available train to Worchester as soon as he learned of the situation. In Worchester, he met with one of his longtime friends, U.S. Senator George Hoar, and convinced the senator to use his influence to delay the widow's deportation.[71] Eventually the Blackwells and Heghinian were able to secure her release.[72]

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[67] Ibid. 238-240.
[68] Alice Stone Blackwell, Diary Entry, November 10, 1921, Folder "1921, Jan. 1 – 1922, Oct. 3," Reel 10, Blackwell Family Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.; Alice Stone Blackwell to Isabel Barrows, March 14, 1903, Barrows Family Papers, MS Am 1807.1, Folder 4, The Houghton Library, Harvard; Alice Mukhitarian to Alice Stone Blackwell, April 16, 1931, Folder "Mu," Reel 16, Blackwell Family Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.
[69] Alice Stone Blackwell to Kitty Berry, December 31, 1895, Folder "Berry, Kitty, 1895," Reel 7, Blackwell Family Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.
[70] Alice Stone Blackwell to Isabel Barrows, July 17, 1896, Barrows Family Papers, MS Am 1807.1, Folder 2, The Houghton Library, Harvard; Alice Stone Blackwell to Isabel Barrows, Undated Letter, Barrows Family Papers, MS Am 1807.1, Folder 5, The Houghton Library, Harvard.
[71] "Blackwell Memorial Meeting," *Woman's Journal*, November 20, 1909.
[72] Alice Stone Blackwell to Isabel Barrows, September 9, 1896, Barrows Family Papers, MS Am 1807.1, Folder 3, The Houghton Library, Harvard.

The Blackwells, with their media platform in the *Women's Journal* and their extensive professional and social connections, were able to get several young men jobs working in households across Boston. Blackwell put notices in various papers advertising the moral, intellectual, and physical strength of the Armenian immigrants. Gulesian stated that eventually they were able to find employment for all 123 men living at the factory. As one would expect, the Armenians were eager to reestablish themselves; Gulesian recounts how, when he would visit the group's temporary shelter with an employment letter in hand, "they know that there is a chance for one of them, and they all come to the front eager to go."[73]

By asking immigrant men to do household labor, the suffragist was challenging the traditional gender roles of the turn of the century. Her plan ran into a few obstacles, but the difficulty did not seem to be with the Armenians. New arrivals to the United States kept seeking Blackwell's help long after the 123 men living in Gulesian's factory had found work. The jobs were a short-term solution to their immediate needs, providing them with room and board as well. Some men were even able to arrange their schedules so that they could also attend schools during the hours they were not working.[74] After ten years had passed of Blackwell advertising the Armenians for domestic work around Boston, one publication summarized the results:

> those who try Armenians say that they are surprised at the success of the experiment. One advantage is that the men can do heavy work, such as caring for the furnace, so that this arrangement obviates the necessity for hiring extra help…. The versatility of some of them is astonishing. One trusted Armenian employee who worked for Miss Blackwell in the capacity of gardener and coachman had a knowledge of shoemaking, book binding, and cooking.[75]

[73] Gulesian, "The Armenian Refugees," 243.
[74] "Men in Housework," *Bulletin of the Inter-Municipal Committee on Household Research* 1, No. 3 (January 1905): 2.
[75] Ibid. One of the few issues with the Armenians, the article noted, was that the men "regard laundry work as unmanly." They were willing to iron clothes but did not want to wash them.

Rather than encountering difficulty with the Armenian community, Blackwell's issues came from the American side. Despite networking on their behalf, Blackwell had more Armenians request her help than she did families with whom she could connect them.[76] The other problem stemmed from women who felt the Armenian men were infringing upon their line of work. An editorial in *Harper's Bazar*, a weekly women's magazine, encapsulated the pushback to Blackwell's efforts:

> This is all very well from the point of view of milady who can hire servants, but how about the other women? Supposing that all over the land Miss Blackwell's example prevails, what is to become of the million or two of 'hired girls'? The wage-earning woman seems to be in danger of being ground to death between two millstones. There is good reason to believe that she is losing her foothold in business pursuits, and there are indications of a reaction against her employment in trades in which men predominate. Men have already driven her out of many branches of the ready-made clothing and other sewing trades. Now if her traditional refuge in household service is to be usurped by man, what is to become of her?

While raising a serious point about the lack of job opportunities for women, the editorial used every available arrow in its rhetorical quiver to protect one of the available occupational avenues for women. While not explicitly racist towards the Armenians, the 1901 editorial described Japanese immigrants, the other ethnic group mentioned in their article, as "little brown men" who were taking jobs from American women out west. The author also implied that men who worked in the domestic sphere lacked masculinity: "Experience points to the fact that the sort of man who takes to house-work, barring professional cooks, is not a very desirable individual in other ways." "Certainly," the writer added, "on sixteen dollars a month and his keep as a house worker he will hardly make a good provider for his family."[77] Factoring in the reference to "milady," the editorial attacked Blackwell's plan by raising the issues of race, class, and gender.

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[76] Alice Stone Blackwell to Isabel Barrows, Postscript of an undated letter, Barrows Family Papers, MS Am 1807.1, Folder 5, The Houghton Library, Harvard.
[77] "Editorial Comment," *Harper's Bazar*, March 23, 1901.

Unsurprisingly, the appeal to racism and traditional gender roles failed to sway Blackwell, who continued to press forward.

That Armenian men were able to attend classes each evening after finishing their domestic work for the day does seem to have been a product of their sex. One publication noted that employers were more likely to object to women attending schools, claiming they did not want them travelling alone on the streets at night. The author noted the importance of employers' disparate expectations of men and women: "Men have more privileges than women, as a rule, in the matter of free hours. In most households the maid is expected to be on call when not actually at work; but the man is more or less in the way when off duty, and is allowed to leave the house. Men employees are not usually imposed upon in small ways, as women are."[78] In an advertisement in *Zion's Herald*, Blackwell tried to attract potential employers with the idea that they would be helping put bright young Christian men through school. She described one Armenian individual who was supported by two neighboring families, one of which gave him meals and the other his lodging. Blackwell stated in the advertisement that he did chores for both families in the early morning and in the evening, and then during the day attended school.[79]

Asking the immigrants to pursue an education, work multiple jobs, and adjust to life in a new country – potentially without a familial support system – was setting a very high standard for the group to meet. Blackwell did what she could to alleviate their financial hardship. In 1896, she began working with Gulesian to establish a fund to bring over the family members of those Armenians who had found work in Boston.[80] After her father died, Blackwell was not in a particularly strong financial situation; at one point, she sold all of the Persian rugs in her home so

[78] "Men in Housework," *Bulletin of the Inter-Municipal Committee on Household Research*, 2.
[79] Alice Stone Blackwell, "Armenians Want to Study," *Zion Herald*, December 23, 1896.
[80] Alice Stone Blackwell to Isabel Barrows, September 9, 1896, Barrows Family Papers, MS Am 1807.1, Folder 3, The Houghton Library, Harvard.

that she would be able to continue giving on the Armenians' behalf.[81] Nevertheless, she continued to employ at least one Armenian caretaker and found enough money to provide a loan to a young student named Stephen Barooshian so that he could get a Bachelors Degree out in California.[82]

Blackwell's best resources, however, were her personal influence and social contacts, which she was quick to leverage on the Armenians' behalf. For example, in 1920 Blackwell sent letters of introduction to administrators at Boston University for a young, aspiring law student named K.A. Sarafian.[83] Sarafian thanked her profusely, stating that even though he did not know her personally, "we Armenians know your kindness and love for [the] Armenian nation very well."[84] In 1907, she arranged for a group of young ladies to perform at a women's group meeting in Newton, Massachusetts.[85] The Newton meeting would introduce a new group of suffragists to the Armenians and give the Armenian women a chance to learn more about the suffrage movement as well. During her time with Chatschumian, Blackwell convinced him of the importance of the women's suffrage to the point where he was referring to himself as "a most sympathetic soldier" of the movement and calling her his general.[86]

Over on the west coast, Rowell's relationship with the Fresno Armenian community often proved mutually beneficial to both he and the immigrants themselves. Rowell was a board

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[81] Anthony Sammarco, "Alice Blackwell's Diary Reveals 19th C. Dorchester, Boston from a Pope's Hill Perspective," *Dorchester Community News*, August 26, 1994.

[82] Alice Stone Blackwell, Diary Entry, November 10, 1921; Stephen M. Barooshian to Alice Stone Blackwell, December 8, 1928, Folder "Barooshian, Stephen M.," Reel 10, Blackwell Family Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.

[83] Blackwell attended Boston University in the late 1870s and early 1880s, graduating with a Bachelors Degree and serving as the president of her class. "Alice Stone Blackwell, 1857-1950," Dorchester Atheneum, http://www.dorchesteratheneum.org/page.php?id=38 (November 10, 2017).

[84] K. A. Sarafian to Alice Stone Blackwell, December 30, 1920, Folder "Sa," Reel 17, Blackwell Family Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.

[85] A.B. Selian to Alice Stone Blackwell, March 25, 1907, Folder "Se," Reel 17, Blackwell Family Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.

[86] Ohannes Chatschumian quoted in Peter Balakian, *The Burning Tigris*, 95; Ohannes Chatschumian to Alice Stone Blackwell, April 4, 1894, Folder "Chatschumian, Ohannes," Reel 12, Blackwell Family Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.

member for the 1915 Panama Pacific International Exposition, a world's fair held in San Francisco. He had asked A. K. Seklemian, the editor of *Asbarez*, to promote the event to the publications' local, national, and international readership. Seklemian, utilizing his contacts around the Mediterranean, had also secured publicity for the Exposition in papers across Egypt and the Ottoman Empire. Rowell wrote glowingly about Seklemian, whom he had known since the late 1890s, and contacted the chairman of the Exposition's Publicity Committee on his behalf. If there was any additional work "which calls for Mr. Seklemian's particular equipment," Rowell wrote, "I am sure you could find no one better adapted to do it."[87] In 1917, the editor of the *Fresno Republican* once again put his influence to use for an Armenian individual. Robert Avakyan had come from Turkey to lead the Exposition's Persian Antiquities section, but the advent of World War One had left him stranded in the United States. Rowell wrote to the clerk of the superior court in Fresno to try to find work on Avakyan's behalf. Avakyan could speak fluently in Turkish, Farsi, Armenian, German, French, and Italian, leading Rowell to ask if the court could hire him as a translator.[88]

The Spectrum of Progressive Attitudes

Rowell and Blackwell, though separated by sex and geography, did have some commonalities. The editors of the *Fresno Republican* and the *Woman's Journal* were both renegades who split from the Republican Party as Progressives in 1912 and 1924, respectively. Both individuals were born to influential parents and were involved in politics at a young age. Both Rowell and Blackwell grew to be prominent in their own right, carving out spheres of influence in their respective cities. Both writers used their newspapers to help the Armenians

[87] Chester H. Rowell to Frank K. Brown, January 3, 1912, Chester H. Rowell Papers, BANC MSS C-B 401, Box 1, Folder "1912, Jan.-June," The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.
[88] Chester H. Rowell to Clerk of the Superior Court, Fresno California, March 27, 1917, Chester H. Rowell Papers, BANC MSS C-B 401, Box 3, Folder "1917, Jan.-Mar.," The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

advance socially, and both leveraged their professional and personal contacts to help the Armenians advance economically. Blackwell, however, was the kind of individual who wanted to assist the entire world, whereas Rowell was more discriminating in his affections.

Rowell's piece for *Collier's*, "Orientophobia," showcased the progressive newspaper editor at the height of his xenophobia. In the article's opening line, he framed the arrival of Asian immigrants as the greatest threat to the West since the battle between the Persians and the Greeks at Thermopylae. He concluded by stating that future generations of Americans cried out not be born of Oriental blood or under Asian institutions.[89] Should "Orientophobia" serve as one's introduction to Rowell, he or she would be surprised to learn that the author of such invective was also a staunch defender of a people from Western Asia.

In reality, progressive reformers' attitudes towards immigrants fell across a wide spectrum of sorts. In the middle were selective nativists like Rowell, Crist, and Hayes, who defended immigrant groups that fell within the boundary lines of their biases and attacked those who did not. Amidst the heated debates over the 1913 Alien Land Act, Rowell wrote that he disagreed with the sentiment that he was "strongly adverse to seeing California occupied by aliens of any race." Instead, Rowell said, he would "revise the language by saying that what we object to is not 'aliens of any race,' but 'persons of any alien race.'" The Germans were not objectionable, he claimed, but Chinese, Japanese, and African American individuals were.[90] As for the Armenian people, he defended them repeatedly throughout his life. Reformers like Rowell held nuanced views towards immigration that do not fit neatly into the paradigm of exclusion woven into many narratives about the progressives and race.

[89] Rowell, "Orientophobia," *Collier's*, February 6, 1909, 13, 29.
[90] Chester Harvey Rowell to David Starr Jordan, April 26, 1913, Chester H. Rowell Papers, BANC MSS C-B 401, Box 1, Folder "1913, Jan.-April," The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

Other reformers like Alice Stone Blackwell, Henry Blackwell, and Dr. Chester H. Rowell fell at one end of the spectrum of progressive attitudes. One could describe these individuals as progressive pluralists, in that they embraced a far-wider range of creeds and peoples than did other reformers. After Blackwell's success publishing Armenian poetry, she also set English translations of Russian, Yiddish, Hungarian, and Spanish poems to verse so that Americans would foster a deeper appreciation of other immigrant groups' cultures. The Boston suffragist was a founder of the United Friends of Armenia, but also affiliated herself with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the Society of Friends of Russian Freedom.[91] Her parents, Henry Blackwell and Lucy Stone, had been a part of the Free Soil Movement and, after the Civil War, split with those suffragists who did not support enfranchising African Americans. Throughout the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Henry Blackwell also served as a conduit between many of Boston's poorer immigrant communities and the politicians of his era.[92] At Blackwell's funeral, Gulesian noted that "the poorer or more unfortunate the woman or man, the more his sympathy and practical aid were poured out on their behalf."[93]

Alongside the Blackwells, Dr. Rowell provides yet another example of a progressive pluralist. At the Armenians' memorial meeting for him, they passed a resolution that encapsulates the attitude of Dr. Rowell and reformers like him: "He was to [us] and to all others in need, help and counsel, at all times kind and considerate … drawing no distinctions as to class

[91] "Papers of the Alice Stone Blackwell in the Woman's Rights Collection, 1885-1950: A Finding Aid," Harvard University Library, http://oasis.lib.harvard.edu/oasis/deliver/~sch01011 (accessed November 12, 2017).
[92] Meyer Bloomfield quoted in ""Armenian and Russian Interest," Folder "Armenia: Poems translated By Alice Stone Blackwell," Reel 22, Blackwell Family Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.
[93] M.H. Gulesian quoted in "Armenian and Russian Interest," Folder "Armenia: Poems translated By Alice Stone Blackwell," Reel 22, Blackwell Family Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.

or to condition in life in his bestowal of kindness and charity."[94] The issue of race did not curb the pluralists' empathy nor their desire to help those in need.

On the opposite end of the spectrum were the Anglo-Saxon supremacists who lashed out indiscriminatingly against all immigrants save for a select few from western and northern Europe. The most extreme Anglo-Saxon supremacist to address the question of Syrian-Lebanese and Armenian immigration was Wilbert Newton, a writer who used the pen name of "Junius Aryan." In 1913, as California legislators debated a bill that would bar aliens ineligible to citizenship from owning land in the state, Newton sent Governor Johnson a piece of racist propaganda he had written and published. The words splashed across its cover are indicative of the overall tone of the item:

> ARYANS READ!
> THINK AND ACT!
> SAVE AND PURIFY
> YOUR RACE AND CIVILIZATION!

Newton's pieces combined pseudo-scientific racial theories, endorsements of trust-busting and an agricultural tariff to protect U.S. farmers, and twenty pages of unmitigated vitriol against "the lower races." The Syrian-Lebanese and the Armenians were among the *many* groups Newton accused of "mongreliz[ing]" America and "pollut[ing]" Aryan women.[95] His proposed racial policies included restricting immigration, outlawing miscegenation, eliminating the Fifteenth Amendment, and modifying the Fourteenth Amendment so that it only protected "Aryan citizens." Newton also endorsed the idea that Congress should legislate that "Semitics,

[94] "Many Resolutions by Organizations in his Honor," *Fresno Morning Republican*, May 27, 1912.
[95] Telegram, Junius Aryan to Governor Hiram Johnson quoted in "The Farmers and the Tariff, An Appeal for Social Justice to Arians" (Philadelphia: Eagle Printing House, 1913) in Hiram Johnson papers, Box 41, Folder "Alien Land Law: Printed Material," BANC MSS C-B 581, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

Mongolians, or Negroes" could not use "the names of any branch of Aryans" since "nature did not intend they should use the language of the Aryans."[96]

The 1913 California Anti-Alien Land Law

In April of 1913, Rowell's handpicked executive, Governor Johnson, signed a bill that prohibited aliens ineligible to citizenship from owning land in the state. According to one progressive writer, California's reformers feared a future influx of Japanese immigration that might eventually dominate the agricultural industry and therefore were trying to "bar alien-Asiatics from ownership of the soil."[97] Their xenophobia resulted in legislative action against the Japanese, but interestingly, not against the Armenians. The Bancroft Library in Berkeley houses Governor Johnson's papers, which contain a subject file devoted to the 1913 Alien Land Law. The subject file spans four full boxes of materials, including Newton's pamphlet. His attack against the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians is one of the few documents in the subject file that reference either group.

In fact, California's progressives as a whole were rather quiet about the Armenians during debates over the alien land bill. The lack of attention towards the Armenians came even as several legislators from Fresno County became involved in crafting the bill, including Assemblymen Chandler, Sutherland, and Cary.[98] The silence came despite the Armenians' rate of land ownership in Fresno relative to other groups. According to the findings of the Immigration Commission, which were published in 1911, "the Armenians have usually

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[96] Junius Aryan, "The Farmers and the Tariff, An Appeal for Social Justice to Arians" (Philadelphia: Eagle Printing House, 1913) in Hiram Johnson papers, Box 41, Folder "Alien Land Law: Printed Material," BANC MSS C-B 581, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.
[97] Franklin Hichborn, *Story of the Session of the California Legislature of 1913* (San Francisco: James H. Barry Company, 1913), 215.
[98] Hichborn, *Story of the Session of the California Legislature of 1913*, 237, 240.

succeeded better than any other race at accumulating property."[99] The commission estimated that in Fresno County, the Armenians owned fifteen thousand acres of land, while German immigrants owned a little over five thousand acres and Japanese immigrants owned a little over four thousand acres.[100]

As the legislature debated the act in 1913, Rowell stayed silent regarding the Armenians. Back in 1909, after Assemblyman A.M. Drew of Fresno had introduced "the first important alien land bill," Rowell did describe Armenians favorably in a draft of his article "Orientophobia" for Collier's. His brief, solitary reference to the group was cut from the version of "Orientophobia" that *Collier's* later published.[101] In 1913, soon before the land-law's passage, California's legislators held an executive meeting with Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan, who tried to discourage lawmakers from passing a bill with the potential to endanger U.S. relations with Japan. The full discussion from the meeting with Bryan is included in Johnson's papers, and again, lawmaker's – including several from the San Joaquin Valley – chose not to focus on the Armenians. Instead, they were quite explicit in discussing California's Japanese population. As one state senator bluntly stated, "the Japanese … are the persons we are directing this law against."[102] A few minutes later in the session, Bryan told the legislators that President Wilson "earnestly advises against the use of the words 'ineligible to citizenship' because those words

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[99] United States Immigration Commission, "Immigrants in Industry; Part 25: Japanese and Other Immigrant Races in the Pacific Coast and Rocky Mountain States," Reports *of the Immigration Commission* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1911), 634-635.
[100] Ibid., 625.
[101] Draft, Rowell, "Article published in Colliers Weekly in 1908 or early 1909," 4; Rowell, "Orientophobia," *Collier's*, February 6, 1909, 13, 29.
[102] George W. Cartwright quoted in "Senate and Assembly in Executive Session," Hiram Johnson papers, Box 41, Folder "California Legislature (1913)," BANC MSS C-B 581, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 21.

can have but one meaning, and you might just as well in terms declare against Japanese and Chinese ownership as to express it in those words."[103]

As for Governor Johnson, he did not bring up the Armenians in any of his letters and telegrams with President Wilson, nor did he reference the group in his correspondence with Rowell. Yet in the Alien Land Law subject file in Johnson's papers, there is an untitled document that clearly and succinctly explains that *In re Halladjian et. al*. deemed Armenians to be of the "white race" and eligible to naturalize.[104] Given that the legislation only targeted those ineligible to citizenship, there is a strong possibility that Governor Johnson knew the bill he was signing did not affect California's Armenians. Overall, California's policy-makers were not publically defending the Syrian-Lebanese or Armenians during the debate, but neither were they attacking the two groups the way they lambasted the Japanese. In some cases, reformers like the Rowells and Blackwells actively removed obstacles out of the paths of the two groups. In other cases, self-described progressives simply chose not to put additional barriers in the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians' way.

While those on opposite ends of the continuum cannot be left out of the narrative, the selective nativists are particularly fascinating. The Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians advanced in the United States through their grit, perseverance, and tenacity of spirit. Along the way, reformers like Rowell, Crist, and Hayes tried to help the immigrants because they fit within the boundary lines of their notions of citizenship. Chapter Six focuses on yet another selective nativist, Democratic Senator John Sharp Williams of Mississippi, who advocated for the Armenian people, this time in the arena of U.S. foreign policy.

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[103] William Jennings Bryan quoted in "Senate and Assembly in Executive Session," Hiram Johnson papers, Box 41, Folder "California Legislature (1913)," BANC MSS C-B 581, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 37.
[104] Untitled Document, Hiram Johnson papers, Box 41, Folder "Alien Land Law: Documents, Laws, Statutes, etc.," BANC MSS C-B 581, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

CHAPTER 7

INFLUENCING FOREIGN POLICY

Harding's Wing of the G.O.P.

Over the course of the Progressive Era, the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians received favorable treatment by the federal government when several other immigrant groups did not. In 1917, Congress placed the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians outside of the Asiatic Barred Zone and exempted those who were fleeing religious persecution from having to pass a literacy test to enter into the country. In the majority of reported cases before their district and circuit courts, federal judges ruled that members of the two immigrant groups were "White" and eligible to citizenship. Progressive figures, even some who were intensely critical of other ethnic groups, defended immigrants as a group in the press and assisted individuals in finding jobs.

In 1918, the immigrants' leading advocate in Congress, Representative Everis Hayes, lost his reelection bid for opposing America's entry into World War One. After the Congressman's defeat, Senator John Sharp Williams, a Democrat from Mississippi, took up Hayes' mantle as the Armenians' legislative champion. Like Hayes, Williams was a lawyer with a hand in the agricultural industry, though the senator's wealth stemmed from cotton rather than fruit. Williams, like Hayes, was selective in his racism, aiding Syrian-Lebanese and Armenian immigrants even as he routinely attacked peoples of Irish, African, and East Asian descent. The key difference between Hayes and Williams was that the senator failed in each attempt he made on the immigrants' behalf. In 1920, Williams could not muster Congressional support for the U.S. to assume a protective mandate for the Republic of Armenia following World War One. Following the passage of the restrictive Quota Act of 1921, the Mississippi Democrat tried and failed to convince Congress to create an exception in the law for Armenian refugees. It did not

help that Williams, a close friend and ally of Woodrow Wilson who "had long advocated a variety of progressive reforms," was operating amidst the conservative resurgence of the late 1910s and 1920s.[1]

During the war, progressives in both parties united to achieve many of their domestic goals.[2] In the arena of foreign policy, however, reformers retreated to their partisan corners.[3] By 1919 and 1920, the increasingly toxic relationship between the Republican-controlled Congress and the Democratic administration of Woodrow Wilson made productive legislating virtually impossible. At the same time, the leading spokesmen amongst Senate Republicans – men like Henry Cabot Lodge, Warren Harding, and Albert B. Fall - were closely aligned with the oil industry and frequent critics of progressivism. Amidst the backlash against Woodrow Wilson, the Republican Party grew less progressive, the Democratic Party factionalized, and America awarded the G.O.P. control of both Congress and the Presidency in 1920. Lodge remained in the Senate in control of the influential Foreign Relations Committee, while Harding became President and made Fall his Secretary of the Interior.

In contrast to the progressives' eagerness to aid the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians, Harding's wing of the G.O.P. tended to be lukewarm towards the two groups. A revealing

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[1] Richard G. Hovannisian *The Republic of Armenia: From Versailles to London, 1919-1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), 2: 373; Robert Harrison, *Congress, Progressive Reform, and the New American State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 22.

[2] Brandeis historian Morton Keller's argues in *Regulating a New Society* that the First World War bolstered the progressive movement. As Keller defines it, progressivism was a quest for greater social efficiency and control in response to the laissez-faire-style chaos of the late nineteenth-century Gilded Age. He argues that First World War served as "epiphany" for the movement, writing how "[the war] was at once a revelation as to how people, goods, and beliefs could be mobilized and organized for an overriding public purpose – the embodiment of the progressive ideal." Progressivism revolved around the drive for a more organized, efficient society while a successful war effort required such an environment; therefore, in Keller's view, the two proved mutually supporting. Keller frames World War One as the catalyst for legislation that increased taxation, limited prostitution, curbed freedom of speech, implemented Prohibition and women's suffrage, and restricted immigration." Morton Keller, *Regulating a New Society: Public Policy and Social Change in America, 1900-1933* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994), 4, 6, 8, 93, 123, 135, 226, 241, 302.

[3] John A. Thompson, *Reformers and War: American Progressive Publicists and The First World War*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987): 2.

moment occurred in 1916, when Lodge's son-in-law, Republican Congressman Augustus Peabody Gardner, spoke out against the provision in Burnett's immigration bill exempting immigrants who had faced religious persecution from having to pass the literacy test. Gardner noted that the exemption was meant to benefit Armenian and Jewish immigrants, but he objected to giving the groups "special privileges."[4] To Lodge and his allies, the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians were just two additional immigrant groups among many. In 1914, Senator Dillingham of Vermont, Lodge's fellow New England nativist, was complaining on the floor of Congress about "the new immigration" coming from "Russia, Austria-Hungary, the Balkan States, and Italy, especially south Italy, in which nations conditions are below those in western and northern Europe and vastly below those existing in the United States." At that point, Lodge interjected two more countries he felt to be subpar, "Syria and Armenia." Dillingham agreed with Lodge, before turning his attention back to criticizing immigration from southern Italy.[5] Progressives like Hayes and Williams, whose socio-economic biases aligned with the Armenians' socio-economic characteristics, were willing to grant the group exceptions and "special privileges," whereas the needs of the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians were not a priority for Lodge and Harding's wing of the Republican Party.

This chapter of the dissertation uses the perspective of Senators Williams, Fall, and Lodge to examine the collapse in support of the American mandatory for Armenia and the lack of support for Williams' bill excepting Armenian immigrants from the 1921 Quota Act, which restricted immigration to the United States by nationality. The events of the late 1910s and 1920s signal the end of the era in which policy-makers consistently viewed the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians with an attitude of tempered inclusion. During the conservative dominance of

[4] *Cong. Rec.*, 64th Cong., 1st sess., 1916: 4869.
[5] *Cong. Rec.*, 63rd Cong., 3d sess., 1914: 640.

the 1920s, Congress and the Harding Administration treated the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians like all the other "new immigrant" groups whom they hoped to restrict.

American Lives and Property

Giving the keynote speech before the crowd at the 1920 Republican National Convention, Lodge declared: "The President has been unable or unwilling to do anything for Mexico, where civil war has raged for years, where anarchy exists and people are suffering. But he thinks of it as our duty to take a mandate for Armenia."[6] A week earlier the *Washington Post* had editorialized against Wilson's request for the Armenian mandate, asking, "Mexico! Does not that word ring in the ears of all Americans, from the President down to the humblest citizen?"[7] At first glance, Mexico seems like an odd country to tie to Armenia. Existing scholarship largely attributes the demise of the mandate to Congressional partisanship and the titanic struggle over the League of Nations between Lodge and President Woodrow Wilson.[8] The primary divide, historiographically-speaking, simply entails which politician historians think failed the Armenians worst – Wilson, the Democratic chief executive of the United States, or Lodge, the Republican Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. While partisanship and the broader issue of the League unquestionably exacerbated Armenia's

[6] Senate Majority Leader Henry Cabot Lodge in "Full Text of Senator Lodge's Speech Sounding Republican Convention Keynote," *New York Times*, June 9, 1920.
[7] Edward B. McLean, "Armenia – and Mexico!" in *Editorials from the Washington Post, 1917-1920* (Washington, D.C.: The Washington Post Co., 1921), 534.
[8] Mark Malkasian, "The Disintegration of the Armenian Cause in the United States," *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 16, Vol 3 (Aug. 1984): 353; John Milton Cooper, "A Friend in Power? Woodrow Wilson and Armenia" in *America and the Armenian Genocide of 1915*, ed. Jay Winter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 109; Lloyd E. Ambrosius, "Wilsonian Diplomacy and Armenia: The Limits of Power and Ideology" in *America and the Armenian Genocide of 1915*, ed. Jay Winter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003),138-145; Donald A. Ritchie, "Congress Confronts the Armenian Genocide" in *America and the Armenian Genocide of 1915*, ed. Jay Winter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 286-289; James B. Gidney, *A Mandate for Armenia* (Oberlin, Ohio: The Kent State University Press, 1967), 225-238; Richard G. Hovannisian *The Republic of Armenia: Between Crescent and Sickle: Partition and Sovietization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 4: 8-28; Phillip Marshall Brown, "The Mandate Over Armenia," *The American Journal of International Law* 14, No. 3 (July, 1920): 397; Balakian, *The Burning Tigris*, 357-362.

prospects, to fully understand the matter scholars also need to recognize the story of revolutions, counter-coups, murder, and petroleum lying just beneath the surface of the mandatory debate.

In 1910, the people of Mexico overthrew their longtime dictator, Porfirio Diaz. Diaz had ruled for three decades, with one hand suppressing Mexico's democracy, the other open to foreign investors desirous of the country's oil and mineral resources. Mexico then elected Francisco Madero president, but Madero was killed in February of 1913 during a violent coup instigated by General Victoriano Huerta. President Wilson took office in March of that year and, disgusted by the manner with which Huerta had assumed power, refused to recognize the new Mexican government. The issue for Wilson was that Huerta's remaining opponents, such as the notorious Pancho Villa and Emiliano Zapata, were not particularly appealing to him either. So instead Wilson assumed a neutral policy he called "watchful waiting." Wilson eventually abandoned this neutral stance, intervening on behalf of Huerta's opponents. Huerta, in turn, was overthrown and replaced by Venustiano Carranza, who styled himself as "First Chief" in 1914. The situation in Mexico became even more chaotic after Villa and Zapata, Carranza's former allies, both rebelled against him.

Throughout 1914, the violence in Mexico grew more and more devastating. It threatened American property investments, complicated the situation along the border, and caused yet another international headache for Wilson just as World War One erupted in Europe.[9] Wilson knew which groups he favored in the war across the Atlantic, but he and his administration were far less sure about the conflict raging just over the Rio Grande. Villa's history of banditry was concerning to the administration, as was Carranza's resentment towards the American and European companies operating in Mexico's oil and mineral industries. The administration was

[9] Edward S. Kaplan, *U.S. Imperialism in Latin America; Bryan's Challenges and Contributions, 1900-1920* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1998), 102.

willing to back whichever side could triumph the quickest, but it had no idea whether that would be Carranza or his opponents. Carranza's men occupied Mexico City but Zapata took the surrounding suburbs and blocked the water supply to the capital.[10] Carranza's forces held the critical coastal area around Vera Cruz, but Villa's supporters controlled much of northern Mexico and could have threatened the American border should the United States have chosen to support Carranza. Wilson wavered back and forth before deciding not to offer diplomatic recognition to either faction and thereby alienating both Carranza and Villa.[11]

Wilson's handling of Mexico drew criticism from Republican politicians, many of whom had preferred Huerta's government to that of Carranza. Showing that they too could alliterate, Congressional Republicans derided "watchful waiting" as "deadly drifting," "scoot and scuttle," "indirect intervention," and "drumhead diplomacy."[12] After a German U-Boat sank the Lusitania, former President Roosevelt attributed the attack to Wilson's cautious attitude regarding Mexico. America's "failure to do our duty in Mexico," Roosevelt proclaimed, "created the contempt which made Germany rightfully think it safe to go into the wholesale murder that accompanied the sinking of the Lusitania."[13]

In 1915, Carranza's forces defeated Villa decisively at the battle of Ceyala. Wilson finally bestowed recognition on Carranza, but this, in turn, enraged Villa, who allowed his men to attack American workers and properties in Mexico. In January of 1916, near the town of San Ysabel, an armed band of *Villistas* swarmed a train carrying American mining workers. Villa's

[10] Ibid., 153.
[11] Ibid., 179-180.
[12] Representative William D.B. Ainey in "Says Wilson's Policy is 'Deadly Drifting,'" *New York Times*, February 25, 1914; Representative Frank W. Mondell in "Asserts President is Badly Advised," *New York Times*, February 28, 1914; Senator William Borah in Marian C. McKenna, *Borah* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1961), 228.
[13] "Roosevelt Heaps Blame on America," *New York Times*, December 1, 1915.

supporters executed all but one of the dozens of Americans on board.[14] Then, early in the morning on March 9, 1916, Villa and a large band of his men crossed the U.S.-Mexico border and attacked the town of Columbus, New Mexico. They raided the town and, after engaging with the 13th Cavalry, withdrew back into Mexico, leaving eighteen Americans dead.[15] In response, Wilson ordered an expeditionary force under General Jack Pershing to go into Mexico to track down Villa.

Following the attack on Columbus, Congress underwent a brief period of unity during which even staunch isolationists voted in favor of the President's plan to send an American Expeditionary force into Mexico.[16] The bipartisanship lasted all of a week before Lodge attributed the American deaths at San Ysabel and Columbus to Wilson's policies. The Senator lambasted Wilson for helping overthrow Huerta's regime, "the only government that offered any prospect of order or peace or responsibility." Lodge stated that Americans in Mexico were "entitled to our protection both for their property and their lives," and that Wilson's administration was the worst in American history "with the exception of Buchanan."[17]

1916 was a presidential election year, and the Republican nominee, Charles Evans Hughes, made Wilson's handling of Mexico a centerpiece of his campaign; the *New York Times* noted that in his Convention address, Hughes devoted more time to Mexico than any other subject.[18] Throughout 1916, Hughes and his Republican surrogates reiterated the same attack on Mexico over and over again, that Wilson had made "personal war" against Huerta and

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[14] John S.D. Eisenhower, *Intervention! The United States and the Mexican Revolution 1913-1917* (NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 1993), 214-216.
[15] Ibid., 217-229.
[16] "Congress Backs Pursuit of Villa," *New York Times*, March 11, 1916; "Senate Committee Backs up President," *New York Times*, March 12, 1916.
[17] "Lodge Opens Fire on Wilson's Policies," *New York Times*, March 17, 1916.
[18] "Hughes Accepts, Attacks Record of His Opponent," *New York Times*, August 1, 1916.

completely failed to protect Americans' lives and property.[19] Wilson, however, easily won a second term, largely on the idea that he kept the United States away from war with both Mexico and Germany.

The Republicans' vitriol towards Wilson over Mexico was not simply political in nature; for some, it was business. Senator Albert B. Fall of New Mexico is a prime example. Fall was an opportunist (he later resigned due to his involvement in the Tea Pot Dome incident, one of the biggest scandals in U.S. political history) with deep ties to the oil industry and who personally had investments in Mexico. Unsurprisingly, Fall became one of the most vocal Republicans pushing for the United States to take control of the country.[20] Fall, alongside Ohio Senator and future President Warren Harding, were both outspoken in their belief that Mexico could not prosper until the U.S. had placed it under the "civilizing influences" of the American flag.[21] Back when Porfirio Diaz had held the position of president, many American firms had worked with the dictator to invest in Mexico, enriching both Diaz and the investors. Many American companies, especially those invested in oil, set up factories and facilities in Mexico, which became targets for Villa and Zapata's partisans. When Senator Lodge or Senator Fall attacked the President for failing to protect life and *property*, it was not vacation homes they were worried about, but rather the American facilities extracting tens of millions of gallons of oil, thereby enriching their political allies.[22]

In 1917, Carranza began to lose popularity and turned to economic populism to assuage the Mexican masses. Mexico drafted a provision in its constitution known as Article 27, which

[19] "Armed Intervention Demanded in the Senate," *New York Times*, January 13, 1916; "Lodge Opens Fire on Wilson's Policies," *New York Times*, March 17, 1916; "Wilson A Failure says Elihu Root," *New York Times*, October 6, 1916; "Hughes says Wilson Warred on Huerta," *New York Times*, September 22, 1916.
[20] Linda B. Hall, *Oil, Banks and Politics: The United Statees and Post-Revolutionary Mexico, 1917-1924* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1995), 15; Clifford Trow, "Woodrow Wilson and the Mexican Interventionist Movement of 1919," *The Journal of American History* 58, 1 (June 1971), 46-47.
[21] "Our Flag Over Mexico," *New York Times*, January 20, 1915.
[22] Hall, *Oil, Banks, and Politics*, 14.

nationalized much of the country's oil industry. When Wilson threatened to pull diplomatic relations with his southern neighbor and Mexico began to back down, Fall demanded immediate intervention. Given the existing tension between the two nations, Fall's actions would have meant war. For Wilson, who by that time had entered World War One against Germany, oil was simply not worth the price of opening another front. As Wilson told his cabinet:

> There won't be any war with Mexico if I can prevent it, no matter how loud the gentlemen of the Hill yell for it…. It is easy for me as President to declare war. I do not have to fight, and neither do the gentlemen on the Hill who now clamour [sic] for it. It is some poor farmers boy, or the son of some poor widow away off in some modest community, or perhaps the scion of a great family, who will have to do the fighting and the dying. [23]

Senator Fall, however, kept up his campaign against Carranza's government. In 1918, the G.O.P. had taken over both Houses of Congress. Lodge, as the ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, assigned Fall to lead a Subcommittee on Mexican Affairs in order to give the senator as large a platform as possible. A contemporary critic of Senator Fall described the subcommittee as perpetrating

> one of the most shameful acts in the annals of the American Republic. It was composed of men antagonistic to the Mexican Government, men who had property interests in Mexico – among them Senator Fall himself – men who for petty party reasons desired to discredit the Wilsonian policy, and it went to work with an ear at the keyhole, in a spirit of smugness, fault-finding, malevolence, and cynicism, attempting to bring to light every petty occurrence, every crime committed by Mexican officials, every manifestation of anti-American feeling – with the obvious purpose of creating international complications. With such a character, with such purposes, with such acts, it became a vile, sinister menace to the peace of two countries and an insult to the Mexican people.[24]

Fall continuously tried to bring the U.S. to intervene in Mexico, but throughout the late 1910s he had to compete for attention amidst news of massacres in Turkey, the end of the war in Europe, and the contentious treaty negotiations of the victorious at Versailles.

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[23] President Wilson in Arthur S. Link, *Wilson, Confusions and Crises, 1915-1916* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1964), 213.
[24] Carleton Beals, *Mexico, An Interpretation* (NY: B.W. Huebsch, Inc., 1923), 269-270.

America and Armenia

As Lodge and Fall clamored for Wilson to protect U.S. interests in Mexico, much of America was transfixed by the tragedy unfolding in Turkey. Historian Peter Balakian estimates that over a million Armenians died during the genocide.[25] Despite the American outcry, Wilson refrained from declaring war on Turkey. According to Secretary of State Lansing, the president and his advisors hoped that the United States' neutrality would keep Turkey from barring the entry of relief workers and from confiscating the property of American businessmen and missionaries.[26] After making the decision not to declare war on Turkey, Wilson's administration would have to act during the peace process if they were to intervene militarily on the Armenians' behalf. In 1918, Wilson seemed to hint at that possibility when he issued his fourteen point plan for peace. The twelfth point stated that minority groups "under Turkish rule should be assured an undoubted security of life and an absolutely unmolested opportunity of autonomous development."[27]

Once fighting concluded in Europe, a small American delegation, which included Wilson and Lansing, travelled to Versailles to represent America in the peace process. At Versailles, the victorious Allied Powers in World War One, chiefly Britain, France, and the United States, agreed to create the League of Nations, an intergovernmental body devoted to maintaining peace internationally. The Allies decided that the League would then assign mandates – essentially protectorates –in Africa and the Middle East for the territories previously controlled by Germany, Austria, and Turkey. As far as Turkey's former territories in the Middle East were concerned, France wanted to oversee the mandate for Lebanon and Syria, while Britain hoped to

[25] Balakian, *The Burning Tigris*, 195-196.
[26] Private Memoranda, Robert Lansing, "Conference with Committee on Foreign Relations on Declaring War on Turkey and Bulgaria, May 2, 1918, Reel 1, Robert Lansing Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.; Balakian, *The Burning Tigris*, 304-307.
[27] Woodrow Wilson quoted in Balakian, *The Burning Tigris*, 300.

oversee Palestine and Iraq. Neither the British nor the French were enthusiastic about assuming a mandate for Armenia, which was more war-torn and less rich in resources than other areas of the Turkish Empire; rather the European powers hoped they could convince the United States to oversee Armenia instead.[28]

While Wilson was willing to take the mandate over Armenia, his secretary of state was not. Lansing was the kind of individual who prioritized material interests over humanitarian needs, and forcefully told the president that the U.S. should only accept the Armenian mandate if it was "attached to some paying region."[29] Over the course of their time in France, Lansing and Wilson's rapport steadily deteriorated due to several disagreements over the League of Nations, to the point where the secretary was writing of his desire "to be free and my own master. I am sick of being treated as a school boy or a rubber stamp."[30] As the various peace delegations haggled over territory, Turkish and Kurdish regulars resumed their attacks on the surviving Armenian populations in Anatolia.[31]

Back in the United States, pressure was mounting for the American government to take action to protect the Armenian people. To push for American intervention in Turkey, an organization called the American Committee for the Independence of Armenia, or the ACIA, formed under the leadership of James Gerard, Wilson's former ambassador to Germany.[32] The ACIA had several goals. First, the organization wanted the U.S. to recognize the Republic of

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[28] Balakian, *The Burning Tigris*, 301.

[29] Desk Diary and Notes, Robert Lansing, August 21, 1919, Reel 2, Robert Lansing Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.

[30] Private Memoranda, Robert Lansing, "How Can I Resign at the Present Time?" October 6, 1919, Reel 1, Robert Lansing Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.

[31] "Latest Phase of the Armenian Situation According to the Most Recent Telegrams from Paris and Tiflis," Department of State, Division of Near Eastern Affairs, August 1, 1919, Chronological File, Box 45, Robert Lansing Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.

[32] Balakian, *The Burning Tigris*, 308-309. Vahan Cardashian, a prominent Armenian lawyer and activist, was very influential within the organization but not officially a member of it. See Richard G. Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia: The First Year, 1918-1919* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), 1: 261.

Armenia, which had formed during the war out of the Armenian-majority territories in Russia. Secondly, the ACIA hoped the Peace Conference in Paris would lengthen the boundaries of the Armenian Republic from Ararat to Cilicia, encompassing the scattered Armenian populations in Turkey and giving the country ports on the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. Third, the group asked the U.S. to send munitions, clothing, and food to the people of Armenia, who were desperately in need of supplies. Finally, the ACIA hoped the U.S. would assume the mandate over Armenia to protect the country from Russian and Turkish encroachment. The ACIA quickly gained bipartisan support. The organization's executive committee included Senators Lodge and Williams, who were two of the most influential voices in Congress for their respective parties, as well as Gilbert Hitchcock, the Chair of the Senate Democratic Caucus, and Governor Hughes, the Republicans' presidential nominee in 1916.[33]

The ACIA was encouraged when both Lodge and Williams submitted resolutions to the Senate in support of the Armenians. Lodge's resolution, introduced in May of 1919, endorsed expanding the borders of the Republic to encompass the Armenian-dominated portions of Russia and Turkey, along with the region of Cilicia, a resource rich area on the Mediterranean Coast that the French wanted as part of their mandate. Lodge also signed onto a letter advocating that France, Britain, and the United States provide enough supplies to the Armenians to support a standing army.[34] Williams introduced his resolution in September of 1919, which recognized the independence of the Armenian Republic, authorized Wilson to use military force to maintain peace in the region, and allowed the president to suspend the Foreign Enlistment Act so that Armenian Americans could serve in the Republic's army.[35]

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[33] Balakian, *The Burning Tigris*, 309; Hovannisian *The Republic of Armenia: From Versailles to London*, 373.
[34] Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia: From Versailles to London*, 367.
[35] Ibid., 374.

Unfortunately for the ACIA, Gerard spent 1919 and 1920 fruitlessly attempting to create a consensus between Lodge, Williams, Lansing, and Wilson. To get anything accomplished, they would have had to surmount several thorny issues. Lansing and Wilson were barely speaking to each other. Lodge and the Republican-controlled Congress were criticizing Wilson's handling of the peace negotiations with increasing force.[36] When it came to Armenia, Lodge repeatedly insisted that the President had the responsibility to act, not Congress.[37] The Senate, Lodge told Gerard, could not order troops to the region, nor send money unless the President made the request first.[38] The Democrats corresponding with Gerard understood the matter very differently. Williams and Lansing argued that, because the United States had not declared war on Turkey, the Senate needed to approve sending troops or other forms of military aid.[39] Privately, Wilson admitted his hesitation to move forward without the explicit backing of Congress, fearing that if he took unilateral action on Armenia's behalf he would be jeopardizing his other foreign policy objectives that were still pending in the Senate.[40] As Gerard frantically served as the go-between for Lodge, Williams, and the Wilson Administration, the situation in Armenia grew increasingly desperate.

By the end of 1919, Williams was one of the few members of either Congress or the Executive Branch who was willing to make the Armenians a priority. The Democratic Senator sent several letters to the president, alternatively proposing Wilson threaten the Turks with the

[36] Balakian, *The Burning Tigris*, 301.
[37] Telegraph, H.C. Lodge to James W. Gerard, August 26, 1919, Reel 54, Henry Cabot Lodge papers, Massachusetts Historical Society; H.C. Lodge to James W. Gerard, January 22, 1920, Reel 61, Henry Cabot Lodge papers, Massachusetts Historical Society; Night Letter, H.C. Lodge to James W. Gerard, June 15, 1920, Reel 61, Henry Cabot Lodge papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.
[38] H.C. Lodge to James W. Gerard, August 8, 1919, Reel 54, Henry Cabot Lodge papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.
[39] Telegram, John Sharp Williams to James Gerard, August 26, 1919, Box 47, Folder Aug 23-26, 1919, John Sharp Williams Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.; John Sharp Williams to James W. Gerard, September 12, 1919, Box 47, Folder Sept 8-14, John Sharp Williams Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.; Confidential Letter, Robert Lansing to James W. Gerard, September 30, 1919, Chronological File, Box 47, Robert Lansing Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.
[40] Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia: From Versailles to London*, 373-374.

"absolute dissolution of the Turkish Empire" unless they immediately stopped all "aggression against Armenia," asking him to prevent the British from withdrawing their troops from Turkey, and suggesting the U.S. send supplies "in a spirit of benevolent neutrality – benevolent to the Armenians."[41] When the president proved noncommittal, Williams also advised him to appoint a minister to the Armenian Republic as a way to provide "an executive recognition of a de facto government."[42] Wilson was focused on building support for the League of Nations and intensely skeptical of Republicans' professions of support about Armenia.[43] In September of 1919, the president embarked on a campaign across the country in an effort to raise popular support for the Versailles Treaty and the League of Nations. Pushing himself beyond his physical capacities, Wilson suffered a stroke on October 2, 1919 and disappeared into the White House.[44] In the president's absence, the State Department was primed to play a greater role. Lansing, however, steadfastly refused to recognize the independence of the Armenian Republic and, by October, was telling senators privately "nothing could be done" for Armenia.[45]

Williams, not getting much help from Wilson's Administration, tried to work with Senate Republicans on the Armenian issue and asked Lodge to combine their separate resolutions.[46] Lodge, in his capacity as head of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, appointed Williams to a subcommittee alongside two Republicans to hold hearings, study the situation in Armenia, and issue recommendations on the matter. The Massachusetts Republican shaped the direction the

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[41] John Sharp Williams to Woodrow Wilson, August 1, 1919, Box 2, Folder: Aug-Dec, 1919, John Sharp Williams Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.; John Sharp Williams to Woodrow Wilson, August 9, 1919, Box 2, Folder: Aug-Dec, 1919, John Sharp Williams Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.
[42] John Sharp Williams to Woodrow Wilson, August 22, 1919, Box 2, Folder: Aug-Dec, 1919, John Sharp Williams Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.
[43] Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia: From Versailles to London*, 373.
[44] Balakian, *The Burning Tigris*, 303; Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia: From Versailles to London*, 370-371.
[45] Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia: From Versailles to London*, 388; Desk Diary and Notes, Robert Lansing, October 8, 1919, Reel 2, Robert Lansing Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.
[46] John Sharp Williams to Henry Cabot Lodge, September 12, 1919, Box 47, Folder Sept 8-14, John Sharp Williams Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.

three-person subcommittee would take by appointing Harding, who had previously expressed his opposition to intervening in Armenia, as its chair.[47]

The subcommittee held hearings in late September and early October of 1919. During the hearings, Williams spoke highly of the immigrant group, singling out the accomplishments of Armenian-Americans.[48] The Mississippi Democrat proved to be the most sympathetic voice on the subcommittee and served as the conduit through which Armenians and their advocates could get their letters, articles, petitions, and photographs published in the subcommittee's records.[49] One of the first Armenian witnesses to testify before the subcommittee was Moses Gulesian, who had helped establish the United Friends of Armenia alongside Alice Stone Blackwell.[50] Gulesian thanked Williams for his genuine interest in the Armenian cause but said he was disappointed by the "lukewarm" response of other Congressmen, singling out "the attitude of the Republican Senators" in particular.[51] Gulesian's missive to Williams was followed by another short, hand-written letter from Blackwell. She thanked the Senator "for the sympathy you have shown for the Armenians" and expressed her "hope that you will continue to do your utmost to save them."[52]

Harding's subcommittee finished their hearings in October of 1919. On November 5, Williams contacted Harding, requesting that they issue a report during the current session of

[47] Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia: From Versailles to London*, 375-376.
[48]Ibid., 379.
[49] Hovannisian *The Republic of Armenia: From Versailles to London, 1919-1920*, 377-382; John Sharp Williams to Warren G. Harding, September 25, 1919, Box 47, Folder Sept 21-25, John Sharp Williams Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.; John Sharp Williams to Warren Harding, October 16, 1919, Box 48, Folder Oct 12-17, 1919, John Sharp Williams Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.
[50] Hovannisian *The Republic of Armenia: From Versailles to London, 1919-1920*, 377-379.
[51] M.H. Gulesian to John Sharp Williams, September 28, 1919, Box 48, Folder: Sept 26-28, 1919, John Sharp Williams Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.
[52] Alice Stone Blackwell to John Sharp Williams, October 2, 1919, Box 48, Folder: Oct 1-7, 1919, John Sharp Williams Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.

Congress, which was two weeks away from ending.[53] Months passed, and still, Harding did not issue a final report. In February of 1920, Williams again pressed Harding to make a recommendation to the full Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Growing desperate, Williams told the Republican senator that he was "willing to do almost anything that will help these poor people along and if I can't get people to go as far as I want them to go, then I will go with them as far as they are willing to go."[54] It took until April of 1920 for Harding's subcommittee to make its report and for Lodge to ask the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to consider sending aid to Armenia.[55]

Mexico Before Armenia

In November and December of 1919, Fall, Lodge, Harding, and the other Republicans on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee began preparing for the U.S. to intervene militarily – in Mexico. An American national named William Jenkins had been kidnapped by a group of Mexican irregulars and held for ransom. He was released by the revolutionaries after it looked like he might die in their care. Carranza's government then had Jenkins and his lawyer arrested under the faulty assumption they were complicit with the rebels.[56] Carranza's government had also recently barred American companies from drilling for oil in the region of Tampico, and in mid-November representatives from multiple oil companies wrote to Lansing to press for the

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[53] John Sharp Williams to Warren G. Harding, November 5, 1919, Box 49, Folder Nov 1-8, 1919, John Sharp Williams Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.
[54] John Sharp Williams to Warren G. Harding, February 12, 1920, Box 50, Folder Feb 7-15, 1920, John Sharp Williams Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.
[55] James W. Gerard to H.C. Lodge, April 3, 1920, Reel 61 Henry Cabot Lodge papers, Massachusetts Historical Society; H.C. Lodge to James W. Gerard, April 7, 1920, Reel 61, Henry Cabot Lodge papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.
[56] David Glasser, "1919: William Jenkins, Robert Lansing, and the Mexican Interlude," *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 74, No. 3 (January 1971): 337-345.

protection of American troops.[57] With Wilson bedridden in the White House, Lansing had quietly called the cabinet together and was generally acting as the de facto chief executive.

On November 24, Fall, who was out of town, received an urgent telegram from a fellow Republican Senator asking him to travel back to Washington; that same afternoon, Lansing wrote in his diary that the U.S. Army and Navy "are ready to act" against Mexico.[58] The State Department decided to delay the push for action until Fall could return back to the capital.[59] In the meantime, Lansing met with the Mexican ambassador and told him that if it came to war, the United States would bring the same level of force against Mexico it had used against Germany.[60] Once Fall arrived back in D.C., he and the secretary of state conferred at Lansing's home to assess the situation.[61] Fall then introduced a resolution in support of breaking off diplomatic relations with Carranza's government. Still very ill, Wilson was unaware of his secretary of state's machinations. Lansing noted in his diary that he was "in some doubt whether President will like it when he learns of it. I am right, so I don't care."[62]

On December 5, 1920, Lansing made the mistake of admitting to Congress that he was not keeping America's commander in chief informed on the situation.[63] After Lansing's public revelation, Lodge sent Fall and Hitchcock to evaluate the president. Wilson was very much

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[57] Amos L. Beaty to Robert Lansing, November 16, 1919, Chronological File, Box 49, Robert Lansing Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.; Union Oil Company of California to Robert Lansing, November 17, 1919, Chronological File, Box 49, Robert Lansing Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.;

[58] Telegram, Frank B. Brandegee to A.B. Fall, November 24, 1919, Reel 31, Albert Bacon Fall Papers, The University of New Mexico Center for Southwest Research, Albuquerque, NM; Desk Diary and Notes, Robert Lansing, November 24, 1919, Reel 2, Robert Lansing Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.

[59] Telegram, C.V. Safford to A.B. Fall, November 25, 1919, Reel 30, Albert Bacon Fall Papers, The University of New Mexico Center for Southwest Research, Albuquerque, NM.

[60] Private Memoranda, Robert Lansing, "Interview with the Mexican Ambassador Regarding Jenkins Case," November 28, 1919, Reel 1, Robert Lansing Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.

[61] Desk Diary and Notes, Robert Lansing, December 1, 1919, Reel 2, Robert Lansing Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.; "Paralyzed on One Side," *New York Tribune*, December 12, 1919.

[62] Hall, *Oil, Banks, and Politics*, 47-49; Desk Diary and Notes, Robert Lansing, December 2, 1919, Reel 2, Robert Lansing Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.

[63] Glasser, "1919: William Jenkins, Robert Lansing, and the Mexican Interlude," 352.

alive, and, although bedridden, he was in a rather feisty mood with what he called the "smelling committee" checking on his health. When Fall entered the room, Wilson's first words were "Well, senator, how are your Mexican investments getting along?" After Fall told the Wilson he had been praying for him, the president asked wryly, "which way, senator?" While he appeared in good humor, the president later told his wife that if he had been able to stand, he would have hit Fall as hard as he could.[64] Three days later Wilson quashed the momentum towards war by objecting to Fall's resolution against Mexico. Furthermore, Wilson made sure to emphasize the president's preeminence in the arena of foreign affairs. "I am confident," Wilson wrote, "that I am supported by every competent constitutional authority in the statement that the initiative in directing the relations of our Government with foreign governments is assigned by the Constitution to the Executive, and to the Executive only."[65]

In the final months of 1919, Fall, Lodge, and Senate Republicans had come tantalizingly close to getting their desired intervention in Mexico, only to have the President step in at the last moment. As Wilson publicly advocated in favor of the mandate, Congressional Republicans became even more hardened against intervening in Armenia. The President's desire to spend American resources in Armenia but not in Mexico embittered several Republican senators, who began linking the two countries with increasing frequency. In October of 1919, Senator Frank Brandegee of Connecticut discussed the British withdrawal from Cilicia on the Senate Floor. Brandegee noted that Great Britain had asked the United States to replace them in Armenia, when William Borah, his fellow Republican senator, jokingly interrupted him: "There are not any undeveloped oil fields in Armenia or Turkey then?" Brandegee replied that "[t]he President is very anxious that we should accept the mandate for Armenia, and therefore I assume that there

[64] Woodrow Wilson quoted in Hall, *Oil, Banks, and Politics*, 49-50.
[65] Ibid., 50.

is no oil or anything else of use to this country there."[66] Brandegee was an ardent Mexican interventionist and worked closely with Fall on his subcommittee on Mexico.

Many other Congressional Republicans were far more direct on the matter. Republican Senator Miles Poindexter of Washington advocated for increased levels of intervention in Mexico and the Philippines before attacking the President for trying to assume the mandate over Armenia.[67] Fall lambasted the idea of setting up a mandatory in the Middle East, asking if the U.S. was sending over men "to guard Turkish harems."[68] Republican Senator Frank Kellogg of Minnesota called for a "Mexican rather than Armenian Mandate," asking rhetorically, "what is Armenia [but] a rather unproductive plateau in Asiatic Turkey?"[69] The Republican chairman of the House Foreign Relations Committee, Stephen G. Porter, called the Armenian mandate "utterly absurd," though he would

> gladly give [President Wilson] the power forcibly to intervene in Mexico and stop the murder and robbery of American citizens which has been going on for over ten years…. If the President would apply 'watchful waiting' to Armenia and other foreign countries and forcible intervention to distracted Mexico, our immediate neighbor, I could agree with him; but distance appears to lend enchantment to the Presidential view.[70]

As Republicans' criticism intensified, several newspapers began amplifying the G.O.P's point of view. The *Pittsburg Post Gazette* stated that it would be far more fitting for the U.S. to "make ourselves the 'mandatory' of our own continent," while the *Milwaukee Sentinel* attacked Wilson for "exactly revers[ing] [Roosevelt's corollary to] the Monroe Doctrine," and suggested that the U.S. "get hold of the stick by the right end."[71]

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[66] "Vote Clears Way in Treaty Fight," *New York Times*, October 18, 1919.
[67] "Progressing Backwards," *New York Times*, June 26, 1919; Rayford Whittingham Logan, *The Senate and the Versailles Mandate System* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1975), 59.
[68] Logan, *The Senate and the Versailles Mandate System*, 64.
[69] "Kellog for Mexican Rather than Armenian Mandate By America," *The New York Post Express*, June 3, 1920.
[70] "Armenia Mandate Goes Before House Committee Today," *The New York Times*, May 26, 1990.
[71] "Wanted – An American Mandate for Mexico," *Pittsburg Post Gazette*, August 21, 1919; "Armenia-Mexico," *Milwaukee Sentinel*, June 12, 1920.

In May, long after it was clear that his request would not yield results, Wilson asked Congress to grant him the authority to take the mandate for Armenia. When it came time for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to vote on the President's request, Lodge and every single Republican voted against the mandate. The Democrats on the committee split, despite Williams' advocacy for the mandate. On May 28, Williams wrote to an Armenian correspondent that "I am prouder of this vote [in support of the mandate] than almost any other I have ever cast since I have been in public life."[72] A few days later, when the matter went before the entire Senate, no Republican voted in favor of Wilson's request.

At the Republican National Convention, Lodge attacked Wilson's handling of both Mexico and Armenia in his keynote speech. Though "anxious to help Armenia in all reasonable ways" Lodge stated that "a mandate to control protect and govern that country would involve sending our sons and brothers to serve and sacrifice their lives in Armenia for an indefinite time. This is a mandate which we in the Senate of the United States think should not be undertaken." Mexico, however, was another matter entirely: "On the other hand, what the President has neglected – a like condition among an unfortunate people at our very doors – we must take up by a wise and firm policy and to restore Mexico to the posture she ought to occupy and thereby help and relieve her people and so benefit the world and extend the reign of peace."[73] In the Republican platform, lodged fittingly between a plank on Wilson's Mexico policy and one attacking the League of Nations, sat a plank stating that Republicans "condemn President Wilson for asking for Congress to empower him to accept a mandate for Armenia."[74]

[72] John Sharp Williams to V. Nazaretian, May 28, 1920, Box 52, Folder May 21-31, John Sharp Williams Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C..
[73] "Full Text of Senator Lodge's Speech Sounding Republican Convention Keynote," *New York Times*, June 9, 1920.
[74] "Text of Republican Platform as Adopted by Chicago Convention Last Night," *New York Times*, June 11, 1920.

Republicans allowed only one piece of legislation regarding Armenia to get through the Senate chamber. A week before the vote on the mandate, Harding sponsored a non-binding resolution that endorsed sending troops to the city of Batu for "the protection of American lives and property."[75] Harding knew that the President would not send men to that particular city since it was already occupied by the Russians. The ACIA, which had waited several months for Harding to take action following his subcommittee's hearings, was severely disappointed. After seeing the resolution, Gerard wrote a scathing letter to Lodge: "From our voluminous correspondence I had been led to believe that you were in favor of America's lending direct aid to Armenia. I feel that we have committed a very grave injustice to Armenia…. Now for over a year we have been talking, and it develops that we did not mean anything."[76]

Republicans had spent every election since 1914 using the chaos in Mexico as a blunt political object with which to hammer over Wilson's head; furthermore, the Republicans on the Foreign Relations Committee, the men in charge of setting Republicans' foreign policy goals, had spoken about overthrowing Carranza and establishing a Cuba-like protectorate over the country as early as 1915. Intervening in Armenia would have taken valuable troops away from oil-rich Mexico and put them towards, in the Republicans' view, an unproductive Armenia. With Lodge, Fall, and Harding leading the way, the G.O.P. tied Mexico and Armenia together, arguing that intervention in Mexico would have to come ahead of intervention in Armenia if the latter was to occur at all. In December of 1920, the Soviets invaded the eastern half of the Armenian Republic and took Yerevan, its capital city. The country became the Armenian Soviet

[75] Gidney, *A Mandate for Armenia*, 225-226.
[76] James W. Gerard to H.C. Lodge, May 13, 1920, Reel 61, Henry Cabot Lodge Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.

Socialist Republic and was incorporated into the Soviet Union in 1922. In Turkey, massacres against the Armenian population continued into the 1920s.

Selective Racism

When it came to the issue of foreign policy, Senator Williams' views were often informed by his understanding of race. If he appreciated an immigrant group, he was more likely to align with their foreign policy aims. He saw the Armenian people as "the vanguard of Europe and of Civilization in Asia" and consequently supported U.S. acceptance of the Armenian Mandate.[77] If he disliked a particular people, he was not shy about voting against the group's interests. In 1920, one of the other international questions on the periphery of the League of Nations debate involved whether or not the U.S. should recognize the Irish Republic during the Anglo-Irish war of 1919-1922. One of the strongest advocates of the Armenian people, the senator was simultaneously one of the primary political antagonists of Irish-Americans. Williams clearly loathed the group. He saw Irish immigrants and their descendants as politically corrupt and alleged that they voted in blocs to support urban political bosses. "Each individual," Williams complained, "ought to vote like each individual of the balance of us, according to his sense of what is right."[78] When it came time for the Senate to vote on a resolution that expressed "sympathy with the aspirations of the Irish people for a government of their own choice," Williams was the only senator to oppose the measure.[79]

[77] John Sharp Williams to Vahan Cardashian, June 16, 1919, Box 46, Folder June 12-16, 1919, John Sharp Williams Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.
[78] John Sharp Williams to Mrs. Chas. E. Burris, June 14, 1919, Box 46, Folder June 12-16, 1919, John Sharp Williams Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.; John Sharp Williams to R.W. Farr, October 28, 1919, Box 48, Folder Oct 28-31, 1919, John Sharp Williams Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.
[79] L. Ambrosius, *Wilsonianism: Woodrow Wilson and His Legacy in American Foreign Relations* (NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 120.

The idea that there were legitimate reasons for immigrants to desire to maintain a semblance of political or national solidarity with other individuals of the same ethnicity was completely foreign to Williams. Like many progressives, the senator especially disliked the idea of “hyphenates”:

> I am tired of men who hyphenate themselves anyhow. I don’t care from what nationality or race a man is derived – English, Scotch, Welsh, Irish, German, Hungarian or Italian – I am sick of him the minute he calls himself any sort of American except just plainly an ‘American;’ and I am sick and tired of these ‘societies’ of hyphenates. If being plainly and purely an American isn’t enough for these gentlemen, they ought to run along home. No man can be 100% Irish and 100% American; furthermore, no man can be 50% one and 50% the other; he must be either the one or the other and be done with it.[80]

Williams also alleged that African Americans – who, throughout his time in office, had endured lynching, economic discrimination, disfranchisement, and segregation – had brought their “misfortunes” on themselves.[81] The Democratic senator assigned the same cardinal sin to African Americans as he did to the Irish: “the fault of attempting to act solidly as a race,” for “anyone who regards himself first as devoted to some racial derivation and secondly as an American is a danger and a menace to American institutions.”[82] Williams’ correspondence reveals that he slurred African Americans as “darkies,” thought allowing the group to fight in World War One was a mistake, and took it for granted that the rumors and accusations of rape that provoked lynch mobs were always true.[83] Ironically, Williams failed to see the contradiction between his embrace of White supremacy and his disdain of racial solidarity.

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[80] Williams to Farr, October 28, 1919, Box 48, Folder Oct 28-31, 1919, John Sharp Williams Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.
[81] John Sharp Williams to R.W. Colomb, November 6, 1919, Box 48, Folder Nov 1-8, 1919, John Sharp Williams Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.
[82] Ibid.
[83] John Sharp Williams to Robert L. Anderson, Jr., October 5, 1919, Box 48, Folder Oct 1-7, 1919, John Sharp Williams Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.; John Sharp Williams to Moorfield Story, October 5, 1919, Box 48, Folder Oct 1-7, 1919, John Sharp Williams Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.

"When you are in a white man's country the white man has a right to govern it," Williams wrote.[84]

Just as the Mississippi senator's racial views informed his foreign policy agenda, so too did they shape his views of immigration policy. When one of the leading anti-Japanese nativists in California asked him to support excluding all immigrants ineligible from citizenship from being able to enter the country, Williams wrote back to say that the U.S. ought to bar all "negroes from the West Indies and South Africa" as well.[85] In 1921, Congress passed the Emergency Quota Act that reduced the number of each nationality that could enter the U.S. in a given year down to three percent of its population in the United States as of the 1910 Census. The legislation passed into law with support from both reformers like Williams and conservatives like President Harding.[86] Williams' views towards immigration was in line with that of many other progressives; he supported restricting the number of "new immigrants" in the U.S., wanted to limit entry to those who were literate, those who were "physically and mentally healthy," and those who were from countries with similar religious and political ideals as the United States.[87]

In the closing months of 1922, just a few months away from retirement, Williams led one last effort on the Armenians' behalf. He introduced S. 4098, which designated that the 1921 Quota Act could temporarily be ignored so that the U.S. could admit 25,000 "Armenian orphans or homeless children" and the relatives of Armenian citizens already in the United States. In early January of 1923, the Senate Immigration Committee incorporated Williams' bill into

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[84] John Sharp Williams to E.S. Edwards, June 27, 1919, Box 46, Folder June 24-30, 1919, John Sharp Williams Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.
[85] John Sharp Williams to V. S. McClatchy, December 22, 1922, Box 60, Folder Dec, 1922, John Sharp Williams Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.
[86] Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, 311.
[87] John Sharp Williams to Moss E. Penn, March 30, 1922, Box 58, Folder 28-31, 1922, John Sharp Williams Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.

S.4092 and sent it back to the upper chamber. In the House, members of the Committee of Immigration and Naturalization held hearings regarding whether or not to provide a legal means for "Near Eastern refugees" to circumvent the restrictions of the Emergency Quota Act.

Several years had passed since Hayes had been a member of Congress. His fellow Californian, Congressman Raker, was still a part of the House Immigration and Naturalization Committee. In the 1910s, when the Labor Department asked Raker to consider whether or not he wanted to exempt Syrian-Lebanese and Armenian immigrants from the restrictive legislation he had proposed, the Congressmen treated the two groups favorably. Sometime during the late 1910s or early 1920s, however, his views seem to have shifted. Just as politicians today might recalibrate their positions from one year to the next, so too did Raker.

During the hearings, the House Immigration and Naturalization Committee invited author Lothrop Stoddard to testify. Stoddard, a prominent eugenicist, was highly critical of the Christian minority groups living along the eastern Mediterranean and referred to them as "thoroughly a mongrel people."[88] In contrast to the Syrian-Lebanese, Armenians, and their political supporters, who had held up the groups' civilizational heritage throughout the racial prerequisite cases, Stoddard stated:

> Levantines are the result of an extraordinary racial mixture which has been going on for at least 2,500 years…. Wherever they have gone in great numbers they have exercised a very baneful influence on whatever country they have entered. If you will go back to Roman history and read the Roman writers, in the latter days of the Republic and the early days of the Empire, you will find the Latin literature filled with the wailings against the Influences of the Levantines in Rome; the destruction of standards, of ideals, and various destructive religious and other ideas, which were brought in by these people. In the latter days of the Empire they swarmed over the western provinces and did a great deal of damage. It is as I say, this Levantine strain which is now seeking admission in such great numbers to this country, and it would be, in my opinion, a great mistake if large numbers of these people were admitted."[89]

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[88] House Immigration and Naturalization Committee, *Admission of Near East Refugees: Hearings Before the Committee on Immigration and Naturalization*, 67th Cong., 4th sess., 1922, 13.
[89] Ibid.

Raker spent Stoddard's time before the committee asking the eugenicist leading questions such as "while we might contribute our funds, do what we can to relieve their suffering, and help them, you do not think that we should go so far as to allow them to tear down our very house?" "No," Stoddard replied, "self-preservation is the first law of nature."[90] Congressman Raker's turn against the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians serves as useful reminder that reformers' attitudes towards the two groups existed along a continuum, ranging from the beliefs of the progressive pluralists to those of the selective nativists to those of the Anglo-Saxon Supremacists. While Senator Williams held steady in the middle of the spectrum, Raker's nativism was becoming less and less selective.

In February of 1923, the House Immigration and Naturalization Committee took up S. 4092 in order to turn the bill into a vehicle to implement an even stricter quota against immigrants.[91] Neither the House nor the Senate iteration passed and by March of 1923 Senator Williams had retired from office. A year later, it was the House version of S. 4092 rather than that of the Senate that became the law of the land. Under the Quota Act of 1924, Congress restricted immigration to a yearly quota of two percent of a group's population in the United States as of the 1890 Census. The legislation also barred individuals ineligible to citizenship from entering the country; the only bit of saving grace from the perspective of the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians was that the act assigned both groups a small quota rather than completely excluding them as racially ineligible aliens.[92]

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[90] Ibid., 17.
[91] Senate Committee on Immigration, *Admission into the United States of Certain Refugees from Near Eastern Countries*, 67th Cong., 4th sess., 1923, S. Rep. 1010, 3-4; House Committee on Immigration and Naturalization, *Admission into the United States of Certain Refugees from Near Eastern Countries and Restriction of Immigration into the United States, Including Revision of the Quota Act*, 67th Cong., 4th sess., 1923, H. Rep. 1621, 4.
[92] Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, 323-324.

While Williams focused on helping the Armenians legislatively, he did engage in personal acts of kindness for a Syrian-Lebanese acquaintance from his hometown. In December of 1922, he contacted several officials on behalf of Armine Weber, a naturalized citizen living in Mississippi whom the Senator had known for over a decade. Weber's sister, Armenie Brahim Moussee, had lived in the U.S. for a few years; Williams wrote that he was "instrumental" in helping her to gain entry into the country during her initial trip. Sometime before World War One, Moussee married and left for Beirut with her husband. After her husband died, Moussee hoped to return to Mississippi to live with Weber. The Senator appears to have made quite an effort to help the Syrian-Lebanese family. Williams wrote to several high-ranking individuals, including the American Consul in Beirut, the U.S. Secretary of State, and the Commissioner General of Immigration, asking them to facilitate Mousee's return.[93]

Williams is fascinating, in that the Mississippi Democrat was one of the most unapologetically racist individuals in Congress in 1922, yet two of his last acts as a senator involved helping Armenian and Syrian-Lebanese immigrants. Williams' final senate term illustrates the considerable impact individuals could have on both policy-making and on the immigrants' lives. By the early 1920s, during the ascendance of Lodge's wing of the GOP in national politics, it was individuals like Fall and Harding rather than Williams who held the most sway.

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[93] John Sharp Williams to Paul Knabenshue, June 22, 1922, Box 59, Folder June 21-26, John Sharp Williams Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.; John Sharp Williams to Charles Evans Hughes, June 22, 1922, Box 59, Folder June 21-26, John Sharp Williams Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.; John Sharp Williams to W.W. Husband, December 18, 1922, Box 59, Folder Dec, 1922, John Sharp Williams Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

Impacting Lives

Individuals – and their biases – matter. Progressive reformers, operating from both inside and outside of the government, made tangible and lasting impacts on the lives of the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenian immigrants in America. Dr. Chester A. Rowell mattered to George Seropian and the other children he kept from being expelled from school. Chester H. Rowell mattered to the editors, writers, and audience of the Armenian-language newspaper *Asbarez*, which he and his uncle helped keep financially viable. Henry Blackwell mattered to Haroutune Heghinian's widowed mother, who was able to reunite with her son and live in the United States due to Blackwell's intervention in her case. Alice Stone Blackwell mattered to the scores of Armenian refugees whom she assisted in finding employment. Everis Hayes mattered to the thousands of Syrian-Lebanese and Armenian laborers who could come into the United States between 1917 and 1921 due to of his efforts to exempt them from restrictive legislation.[1] John Sharp Williams mattered to Armenian individuals like Moses Gulesian and George Topakyan, who wrote to the Senator to express their gratitude for his efforts to protect their decimated compatriots.[2]

[1] According to statistics from the U.S. Bureau of Immigration, 14,698 Armenians and 9,569 "Syrians" entered into the country between 1917 and 1921. The Asiatic Barred Zone prevented Asian laborers from entering into the U.S. While not all 14,698 Armenians and 9,569 Syrians were laborers, undoubtedly a large portion of the two groups benefitted from Congress excluding them from the Barred Zone. U.S. Department of Labor, *Annual Report of the Commissioner General of Immigration to the Secretary of Labor, Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1922* (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1922), 127.

[2] Gulesian to Williams, September 28, 1919, Box 48, Folder: Sept 26-28, 1919, John Sharp Williams Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.; George H. Topakyan to John Sharp Williams, January 10, 1923, Box 61, Folder Jan 9-13, 1913, John Sharp Williams Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.

Reformers' actions and biases could also affect the lives of Syrian-Lebanese and Armenian immigrants in very negative ways. Richard Campbell and Raymond Crist, the leaders of the U.S. Naturalization Bureau, caused the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians years of anxiety and cost them time, effort, and money by forcing them to defend their racial status in court. Fortunately for the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians, the majority of judges who reported rulings in their naturalization cases saw the immigrants the same way that Rowell did – as intelligent, civilized, assimilable, and eligible to citizenship.

Overall, reformers' attitudes towards the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians spanned a kind of continuum. At one end, pluralists like Dr. Rowell, Alice Stone Blackwell, and Henry Blackwell treated all disadvantaged ethnic groups favorably. Opposite the pluralists were the Anglo-Saxon supremacists who saw all other groups as undesirable. Campbell is a useful example of this point of view, while writer Wilbert Newton, aka "Junius Aryan," took the outlook to an extreme. Finally, selective nativists like Crist, Chester H. Rowell, Congressmen Hayes and Raker, and Senator Williams fall somewhere in-between the two poles, given that they supported the Syrian-Lebanese or the Armenians but were deeply xenophobic towards other immigrant groups. On balance, self-described progressives helped more than hurt the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians. The selective nativists were instrumental in this regard, especially when it came to federal policy. Throughout the 1910s, Hayes and Williams were at the forefront introducing bills benefitting the two groups and shepherding the legislation through their respective houses of Congress. It merits attention that two of the leading Congressional nativists, who came from states with particularly xenophobic reputations, became advocates for a population of Middle Eastern immigrants.

That Christianity was the dominant religion of the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenian immigrants in America was obviously appealing to policy-makers. Stories about Turkish atrocities against Armenian Christians made front-page news throughout the 1890s, 1900s, and 1910s. Church members, especially those from denominations that had a missionary presence in the Middle East, cared deeply about the fate of the Christian minorities in the Ottoman Empire. By supporting the Armenians or excoriating the "terrible Turk," politicians could engage in virtue signaling to their constituents that they shared the same concerns and causes. However, given the frequency and passion with which progressives like Rowell, Hayes, and Williams emphasized the issue of assimilability, it is clear that Christianity was not the sole characteristic important to selective nativists. A variety of the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians' socio-economic characteristics – which included not just their religion, but also the occupational paths they took, the educational choices they made, and the civilizational history to which they laid claim – aligned with the biases of the selective nativists and turned them into advocates for the two groups. Books, letters to the editor, and even private letters indicate that multiple Syrian-Lebanese and Armenian activists were well aware of progressive officials' biases and catered to them accordingly. H.A. Elkourie and Kalil Bishara sought to appeal to the policy-makers' prejudices in their writing, as did Aroos Hilda Asadian in her correspondence with Crist.

In several cases, leaders in the immigrant communities forged partnerships with the era's reformers. M. Vartan Malcolm came to work with Crist to advance the Cartozian citizenship case. The Rowells shared resources with A.K. Seklemian and the other editors of *Asbarez*. Blackwell could not have produced *Armenian Poems* without the help of Ohannes Chatschumian and other Armenian translators. When scores of refugees arrived in Boston in the mid-1890s, the United Friends of Armenia would have found it extremely difficult to care for every individual

had Moses Gulesian not generously provided his factory to house them. In 1919, Williams collaborated with Malcolm and Gulesian during the Senate Foreign Relations subcommittee meetings chaired by Harding.

Many in the immigrant community were cognizant of the contributions of their friends in the progressive movement. When Dr. Rowell died, *Asbarez* devoted an issue to memorializing his life.[3] After Chester H. Rowell sold the *Fresno Republican*, the manager and editor of *Asbarez* complimented his progressive ideals and added that they would be "forever indebted" for his support of Armenia and its people.[4] Following Henry Blackwell's death, the Armenians of Boston held a meeting to honor the reformer and created a fund for orphans in his honor.[5] They met again at Faneuil Hall in 1904 to celebrate Alice Stone Blackwell's contributions to their cause and to present her with a portrait they had commissioned. The two young Armenians chosen to unveil the namesake were the suffragist's namesake, Alice Araxi-Selian, and her godchild, Levon Eksergian. Blackwell found all the attention overwhelming and told another guest she "might have to hide under the table."[6]

Into the 1920s

While many progressives worked with the two immigrant groups, Harding's administration disappointed many Armenian leaders and progressive reformers alike. Given Senator Williams party affiliation, it is no surprise that the Mississippi Democrat opposed

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[3] The issue of *Asbarez* devoted to Rowell came out on May 31, 1912.
[4] A. Khederian and T. Charshafjian to Chester H. Rowell, October 14, 1920, Chester H. Rowell Papers, BANC MSS C-B 401, Box 8, Folder "Miscellaneous Correspondence - A," The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.
[5] "Honor 'Father of Armenians,'" *Boston Evening Transcript*, September 27, 1909.
[6] Pressed to speak, Blackwell encouraged her Armenian audience to become citizens so they might bring their political power to bear in behalf of their oppressed country." Ever the pluralist, Blackwell was not focused on eradicating the immigrants' attachment to their place of birth, but rather urged them to naturalize so that they would be more effective at pressuring the U.S. government to help them achieve their goals. "Honors to Alice Stone Blackwell." *Woman's Tribune*, June 11, 1904.

Harding's candidacy. Interestingly, so too did Rowell and Blackwell, whose families had deep ties to the Republican Party. Rowell supported Harding's Democratic opponent, a progressive senator from Minnesota. Harding ultimately won the presidency, much to Rowell and Blackwell's disappointment. When conservative activist Anna Sumner Bird cast her vote for Harding in 1921 as one of Massachusetts's presidential electors, Blackwell wrote in her diary "God save the Commonwealth of Massachusetts …. Thought it was needed with Harding, Coolidge, and all the other reactionaries in the saddle."[7]

In 1921, Harding selected Fall to serve as his Secretary of the Interior. The cabinet position that Fall coveted, that of Secretary of State, went to former Republican presidential candidate and ICIA member Charles Evans Hughes. Despite all of the agitation from Fall and other Republican Senators during Wilson's presidency, Harding's administration never sent American forces into Mexico. Carranza had been overthrown in May of 1920 by General Álvaro Obregón. Hoping to secure recognition from the U.S., Obregón began trying to assure the government that he would take a more favorable view than his predecessor towards American and European investments in Mexico. Harding's administration spent years negotiating back and forth with Obregón's government over the interrelated issues of oil and diplomatic recognition; eventually in September of 1923 the two sides reached an agreement.[8] By that time, Secretary Fall was no longer in the government.

In 1922, rumors had begun to percolate involving Fall and the leasing of the Teapot Dome naval oil reserves in Wyoming. The secretary resigned from Harding's cabinet in January of 1923. Senate investigators came to suspect that Fall was corrupt after they discovered that he

[7] Alice Stone Blackwell quoted in Sharon Hartman Strom, *Political Woman: Florence Luscomb and the Legacy of Radical Reform* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2001), 100.
[8] Hall, *Oil, Banks, and Politics*, 52-59; Henry C. Beerits, "Relations with Mexico," Charles Evans Hughes Papers, Box 183, Folder Beerits Memoranda Relations With Mexico, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C., 1-14.

had accepted a 100,000 dollar “loan” from Edward Doheny, the owner of the Pan American Petroleum and Transport Company. In exchange for money and gifts from Doheny and fellow oil tycoon Harry Sinclair, Fall had awarded control of the naval oil reserves at Elk Hills to Doheny and the oil fields at Teapot Dome to Sinclair without allowing for a competitive bidding process. Sinclair would serve time for jury tampering while Fall was convicted for accepting the 100,000 dollar bribe from Doheny.[9]

The issue of petroleum also drew the attention of Secretary Hughes throughout his time in Harding’s cabinet. The former presidential nominee resigned from the ACIA shortly after becoming secretary of state. As secretary, Hughes hoped to normalize relations with Turkey, “preserve the open door in the Middle East,” and help American companies compete with the Europeans for the region’s oil.[10] Massacres against the Armenians continued into the 1920s, most notably after the French withdrew from Cilicia in 1922 and after the Turks captured Smyrna in the Greco-Turkish war. Mark Bristol and Allen Dulles, the U.S. High Commissioner in Turkey and the head of the State Department’s Near East Division, discussed trying to suppress or discredit news of the massacres and complained about Americans’ support for the Armenians’ cause.[11] “I’ve been kept busy,” Dulles wrote, “trying to ward off congressional resolutions of sympathy for [the Armenians and Greeks].”[12]

Following the Turkish victory over the Greeks, the European powers negotiated an end to the conflict in the Swiss city of Lausanne. The treaty that emerged out of the Lausanne Conference ignored the Armenians entirely. Vahan Cardashian, a prominent Armenian lawyer

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[9] Hall, *Oil, Banks, and Politics*, 59; David H. Stratton, Two Western Senators and Teapot Dome: Thomas J. Walsh and Albert B. Fall,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 65, No. 2 (April 1974): 57-65.
[10] Balakian, *The Burning Tigris*, 367; Henry C. Beerits, “Relations with Turkey,” Charles Evans Hughes Papers, Box 183, Folder Beerits Memoranda Relations With Turkey, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C., 1.
[11] Balakian, *The Burning Tigris*, 368-369.
[12] Allen Dulles quoted in Balakian, *The Burning Tigris*, 369.

loosely tied to the ACIA, alleged that during negotiations “the Department of State became a concession-hunting agency for the Standard Oil Company.”[13] Secretary Hughes, for his part, felt that trying to provide the Armenians with their own territory in Turkey would be useless without European or American forces to defend it. Since neither the Europeans nor the Americans were willing to provide troops to assist the Armenians, there was no reason for the negotiators to carve out land for the group in Turkey.[14]

For Williams, the Lausanne Treaty was yet another blow towards his hope of seeing the United States aid the Armenian people. He retired to his Mississippi cotton plantations in 1923, embittered towards both the Allied Powers and his congressional colleagues for repeatedly abandoning Armenia.[15] Rowell was also upset with the negotiators at Lausanne and blamed the U.S. and the European powers for having “given Armenia back to the Turks."[16] By 1922, Rowell was far-removed from the height of his political power. In 1916 he had lost his greatest source of influence when Governor Johnson won election to the U.S. Senate and adopted a new set of confidantes. The two broke off both their friendship and their political relationship after Rowell came out in support of the League of Nations.[17] In March of 1920, the California progressive published an editorial supporting U.S. acceptance of the Armenian mandate.[18] He sold the *Fresno Republican* in the fall of 1920 and, over the next two decades, worked as an

[13] Vahan Cardashian quoted in Balakian, *The Burning Tigris*, 369.
[14] Henry C. Beerits, “Relations with Turkey,” Charles Evans Hughes Papers, Box 183, Folder Beerits Memoranda Relations With Turkey, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C., 8.
[15] John Sharp Williams to G. H. Papzian, February 16, 1922, Box 58, Folder Feb 9-16, 1922, John Sharp Williams Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.; John Sharp Williams to G.H.Topakyan, January 16, 1923, Box 61, Folder Jan 14-31, 1923, John Sharp Williams Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.
[16] Chester H. Rowell quoted in "Current Notes," *The New Armenia* XIV, No. 4, (July-August 1922): 63.
[17] John T. Stover, “The California Progressives and the 1924 Campaign,” *California Historical Quarterly* 51, No. 1 (Spring 1972): 61.
[18] Chester H. Rowell, “For a Free Armenia,” *Fresno Morning Republican*, March 14, 1920.

editor for the *San Francisco Chronicle*, taught political science courses at Stanford, and served as a member of the University of California's Board of Regents.

In 1917, Blackwell sold the *Woman's Journal* to a suffrage organization ran by Carrie Chapman Catt. In 1924, she served as a presidential elector for La Follette's Progressive Party and continued to advocate for a variety of causes throughout the 1920s and 1930s.[19] Blackwell frequently received appreciative letters from Armenian immigrants, some of whom she had never met. On Christmas Eve of 1920, Sahag Bedrosian of Fresno sent her a box of dried fruits along with a complimentary letter, in which he compared her to Abraham Lincoln and wrote that he was teaching his son and three daughters to "always follow the example of Miss Alice Blackwell."[20] She never married; historian Lillian Faderman writes that Blackwell's "first – and indeed, last" love interest was her aunt's adopted daughter, Kitty Barry, whom she lived with during the 1920s and 1930s.[21] As the years wore on, Blackwell kept up a correspondence with Armenian friends and acquaintances, including Rachel and Hosanna Sarkissian, with whom she had been friends since 1919.[22] Up until the end of Blackwell's life, the Sarkisian sisters would send her food each holiday season – Armenian shortcake, pastes, candies, and fruits.[23]

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[19] Strom, *Political Woman*, 108.
[20] Sahag Bedrosian to Alice Stone Blackwell, December 24, 1920, Folder BE, Reel 9, Blackwell Family Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
[21] Lillian Faderman, *To Believe in Women: What Lesbians Have Done for America – A History* (NY: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1999), 37-39.
[22] Koharig Sarkisian to Alice Stone Blackwell, December 6, 1949, Folder SA, Reel 17, Blackwell Family Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
[23] Alice Stone Blackwell to Rachel Sarkissian, May 20, 1939, Folder Sarkissian, Rachel 1925-1942, Reel 17, Blackwell Family Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.; Alice Stone Blackwell to Rachel Sarkissian, December 24, 1939, Folder Sarkissian, Rachel 1925-1942, Reel 17, Blackwell Family Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.; Alice Stone Blackwell to Rachel Sarkissian, January 1, 1941, Folder Sarkissian, Rachel 1925-1942, Reel 17, Blackwell Family Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.; Alice Stone Blackwell to Rachel Sarkissian, September 14, 1942, Folder Sarkissian, Rachel 1925-1942, Reel 17, Blackwell Family Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.; Alice Stone Blackwell to Rachel Sarkissian, November 29, 1949, Folder Sarkissian, Rachel 1943-1949, Reel 17, Blackwell Family Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

An octogenarian by the time World War Two broke out, Blackwell was especially devastated by the conflict's human costs. After Rachel Sarkissian sent her a letter on Mother's Day in 1940, Blackwell stated, "I only wish I could mother all the Armenians who need it – and everyone in the world who needs it." She noted that she "had been thinking of my own mother, and how good she was – and how sorry she would be if she could see what was going on in the world."[24] Her overall health was good, though she acknowledged that her eyesight had badly weakened. Friends would come over to her home each weekday at nine o'clock to read the newspapers and her morning mail to Blackwell aloud; then each afternoon and evening, she would sit and listen to the radio.[25] Blackwell lived another ten years, passing away in March of 1950 at the age of ninety-two.

Following her death, *Armenian Affairs* published several stories detailing her life, her contributions, and her friendship with Chatschumian.[26] Edna Stantial, Blackwell's assistant, organized and donated her papers. Amidst the letters and journal articles were three locks of hair Blackwell kept throughout her life, which came from Henry Blackwell, Lucy Stone, and Ohannes Chatschumian.[27] Stantial also added an editorial note to the collection describing Blackwell and Chatschumian's bond:

> Alice Stone Blackwell was devoted to Ohannes, and if he had lived they no doubt would have been married. Miss Blackwell told me in 1930 when she was publishing the life of her mother, that if Fate had treated her 'a little more kindly' she might be including in the story of Lucy Stone the names of Armenian-American grandchildren.

[24] Alice Stone Blackwell to Rachel Sarkissian, May 13, 1940, Folder Sarkissian, Rachel 1925-1942, Reel 17, Blackwell Family Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
[25] Alice Stone Blackwell to Rachel Sarkissian, November 30, 1940, Folder Sarkissian, Rachel 1925-1942, Reel 17, Blackwell Family Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
[26] See "Alice Stone Blackwell – A Symposium," *Armenian Affairs* 1, No. 2 (Spring 1950): 134-150.
[27] Balakian, *The Burning Tigris*, 101.

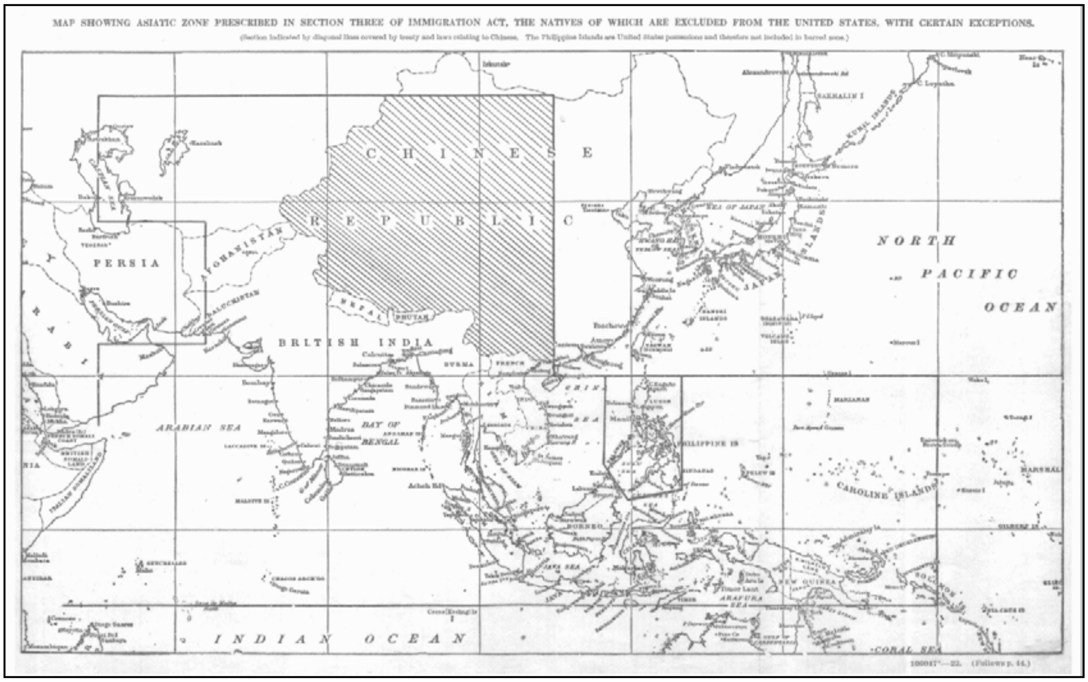
Stantial wrote that Blackwell had said she had gone through several “school-girl ‘crushes,’” but that “she never had ‘any real affection for any man except Ohannes.’”[28] Whatever the exact nature of the bond they shared, the connection between the two sparked a lifetime of devotion between the suffragist and the people of Armenia.

The story of how different segments of reformers treated the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians illuminates both the nature of progressivism and the ability of the two immigrant groups to recognize and navigate the political currents of the early twentieth century. By showing how officials’ socio-economic biases informed their policy-making (to the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians’ benefit), this project brings nuance to historical narratives that frame “the progressives’” attitudes towards “new immigrants” purely in terms of exclusion. Rather, throughout the 1900s and 1910s, some of the staunchest progressive nativists in Congress found it in themselves to advocate for the Syrian-Lebanese and Armenians. Given all the obstacles that the first generation of immigrants had to overcome in order to succeed in the United States, it was significant when reformers sought to remove barriers from the groups’ path rather than adding to their difficulties.

[28] Edna Stantial, “Editorial Note,” Undated, Folder Armenia: Chatschumian, Ohannes, Reel 22, Blackwell Family Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

APPENDIX A

MAP OF THE ASIATIC BARRED ZONE CREATED BY THE US IMMIGRATION BUREAU IN 1922



Map Showing Asiatic Zone Prescribed in Section Three of Immigration Act, the Natives of which are Excluded from the United States, with Certain Exceptions

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

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